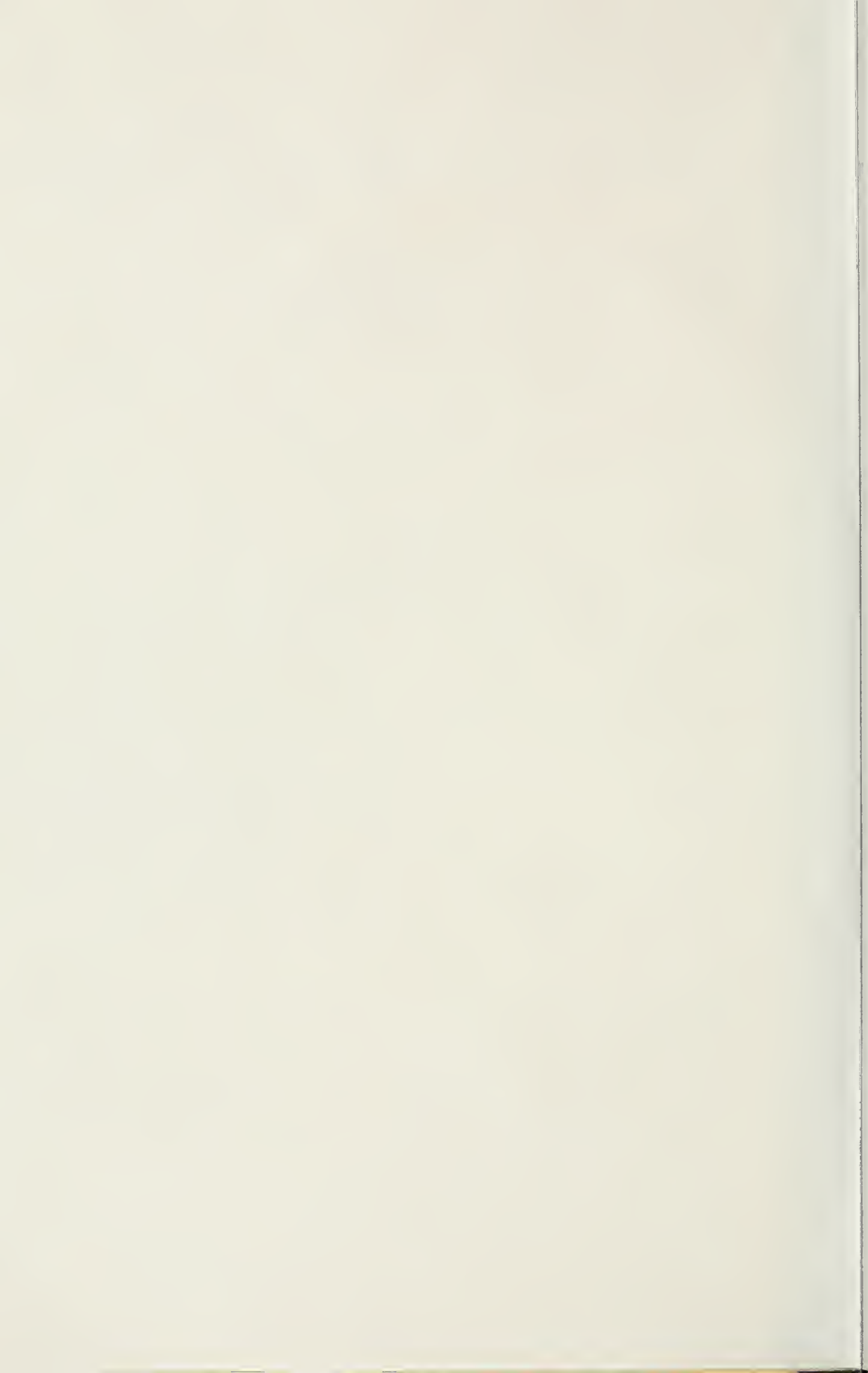


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"A LOTT OF CITY IN 100
YEARS" 1871-1971: A Centennial
History of Gibson City, Ill.



"A LOTT OF CITY IN 100 YEARS"

1871 - 1971



CENTENNIAL HISTORY

of

Gibson City, Illinois

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Gibson City, Illinois

published by the authority

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GIBSON CITY AREA CENTENNIAL, INC.

June 26 Thru July 3, 1971

Gibson City, Illinois 60936

"A Lott of City In 100 Years"

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IN APPRECIATION

To all of you who helped make this book possible, we are grateful. The Centennial Book Committee of the Gibson City Area Centennial Association wishes to thank all those who wrote articles, loaned pictures and gave so freely of their information and time. We especially thank Mrs. Bess Miner Johnson, Mrs. Helen Foster Kelly and Miss Evelyn Dueringer for their literary contributions, and the Gibson City Coin Club which designed the Centennial Medallion.

We crown Mrs. Valeria Hunt of the Gibson City Courier staff "Super Belle" for her editing, writing and organizing of the material for this book !

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The Frederick Barrow family came from Frederick County Virginia to the Gibson City area in 1867, to seek a new life after the ravages of the Civil War. (Picture - 1872)

1. Frances Virginia Barrow (Mrs. Joseph Jones)
2. Ann America Barrow (Mrs. Oliver Perry Hagin)
3. Frederick Barrow
1. Mary Ann Smith Barrow (Mrs. Frederick)
5. Alberta Catherine Barrow (Mrs. Samuel W. Wade)
6. Mary Owen Barrow (Mrs. Samuel H. Preston)
7. Lewis William Barrow
8. Alpheus Walker Barrow
9. Augustus Adolphus Barrow
10. John William Barrow
11. Hamilton Jefferson Barrow
12. Charles Frederick Barrow

AGRICULTURE

Surely the true history of Gibson City cannot be told without a section on agriculture and something of the early pioneer settlers and their progress during the last 100 years. There will be some unintentionally omitted due to lack of records.

The land in this area was "not a barren waste; it was a bleak, cold waste in the wintertime and lush grass in the summer." The snow went the way the wind took it, as far as it wanted to go and the tumbleweeds did the same. In the summer, it was swamp, grass, and flowers. The wind blowing the tall grass was as beautiful as waves on the sea. One could see as far as the strength of the eyes would permit, and if one knew where he wanted to go, there was nothing to prevent or guide him. Ponds of water were numerous in the tall grass which was easier to walk into than out of.

The country was given over mostly to grazing and cattle were fattened on grass, then driven to market in Chicago. The farmers had a hard time keeping cattle and deer from their little patches of corn. They purchased hedge plants by the hundreds for fences, along with some zig - zag rail ones. These fences gave way to wire ones, and years later to some electric ones for a temporary fence. Today one sees very few of any type.

The first farm buildings were made of logs. By 1875, some saw mills were available and roughly - sawed lumber was used. As time went by, farm buildings changed with needs; materials were manufactured to permit building with concrete, brick, steel, as well as wood.

One of the early settlers to have a brick and tile factory in the area, before Gibson City, was Andrew Jordan who came from New York in 1854 by covered wagon. His first home was a log cabin built on the Jordan homestead south of Gibson City. The farm is now owned and farmed by Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Reiners. Mrs. Reiners is a great - granddaughter of Andrew Jordan. He had the first tile and brick factory, and most of the early tiling was done using his tile. In 1880, he donated 20,000 bricks with which to build the First Christian Church in Gibson City. He was a successful farmer and eventually owned 1,100 acres of good land, feeding most of the corn he raised to fatten cattle. The corn was mostly fed from the shock with the corn cut by hand, and hauled in on a sled during the winter. Mr. Jordan planted his first corn under trying circumstances. His wife dropped the corn by hand covering it with the hoe while he plowed the ground ahead with a walking plow and their first - born baby in his arms.

It took two or three years of farming this prairie sod before the fibrous roots were decayed enough to raise a good crop of corn. Later the corn planter came into use. It was a crude implement with two box - like funnels - one on either side in front of the wide wheels. The driver's seat was on spring rods behind and above the corn boxes. There was a crank that had to be jerked back and forth to release the corn from the boxes. Before planting, the fields were marked at three feet opposite from the way it was to be planted; as the planter crossed these marks, the corn was dropped by jerking the crank. About this time, the double - shovel cultivator came into use which required a complete round of the field for each row of corn. A polished steel plow was introduced by 1870 revolutionizing cultivation of our prairies.

Along with the improved corn planter came the reaper, about 1884, which gave great aid in the harvesting of wheat, oats, and rye. The usual way of sowing small grain was by hand and covering by dragging brush over the grain. The harvesting was done by cutting the ripened grain with a

cradle; then a flail was used to separate grain from the straw by beating it out. The wind then blew away the chaff and dirt. One of the first successful reapers was built in Bloomington. Later came the crude binders which cut and bound the grain to be shocked by hand. Then came the threshing machines where the straw was carried away from the separator by canvas aprons and stacked by men to preserve for winter feed. It took 30 or more men to keep the machine supplied with sheaves of grain hauled in from the field and the threshed grain hauled away for storage to keep a large threshing machine operating at a profit to the owner. These canvas aprons were soon replaced by a blower on the rear of the separator which blew the straw onto a stack.

The next step of progress for the small grain farmer was the combine that can now harvest as much in a day as 30 men could do 50 years ago. About this time, too, new railroads were able to carry grain to distant markets.

Corn pickers came into use around 1920 - the first ones were single row and very crude. They were pulled by horses, and, needless to say, were very inefficient. Then came the single row pulled by tractor; they were followed by pull - type 2 - row; then the mounted 2 - row that was and is very efficient, as are the 3 - row. Now much of the corn is harvested by large combines with "corn heads" attached that pick and shell 20 to 30 acres a day. To keep up with the times, many are air - conditioned.

Corn elevators came into general use about 1910. The first ones were very crude, but saved much hand - scooping and hard labor as all corn cribbed before was scooped into rail - pin cribs. Rapid improvement was made in the elevators and as higher and larger cribs were built, inside elevators were installed.

Careful farmers found their profits consisted in a system of mixed farming, taking advantage of all improved machinery, seed selection, and the best of breeding in all kinds of livestock. Machinery of every kind has so improved through the years that agriculture is no longer just a farm enterprise, but a well - set - up business that has required a well - planned rotation of crops, commercial fertilizer, hybrid seeds, and breeding and feeding of livestock. We should be able to profit by the hardships and efforts of our forefathers, but may also give to our sons and daughters the better ways and means of our agriculture.

Listed here are some of the pioneer farmers who did much to promote agriculture in the vicinity of Gibson City during the past 100 years. The information was obtained mostly from "Illustrated Historic Atlas of Ford County, Illinois, 1884" and "Portrait and Biographical Record of Ford County, 1892". Undoubtedly, some have been omitted due to lack of information.

1. **THOMAS STEVENS** - Mr. and Mrs. Stevens and family settled on Section 35 of Drummer Township in the early fifties. He engaged largely in cattle raising and hired men to work for him. They also drove the fattened cattle to market in Chicago. Two of the men were John Kerchenfaut and William Day, Sr. These men remained in the area, buying land for themselves as they could afford it. The Stevens' home was a large one located on what was then called Stevens' Creek and is now called Drummer Creek. It was located on the main road from Danville to Peoria and was a stopping place in those days for travelers.

2. **FREDERICK BARROW** - Frederick and Mary Ann Barrow with their 16 children came to this area in 1867 from Virginia and built their first home two miles from our village on raw, unbroken prairie land. The Civil War had completely destroyed their property in Virginia, so they moved northwest. Their children included John, Hamilton, Augustus,



An early farm scene



Anna, Alpheus, Frances, Alberta, Charles, Mary, and Lewis. There were eight enrolled in the Scotland School at one time. Because of Mr. Barrow's ill health, they moved to Gibson City in 1882. He passed away in 1885. Five of the Barrow sons and one daughter, Mrs. Anna Hagen, lived on their own farms east of town.

3. **CALIB MCKEEVER** — Mr. and Mrs. Calib McKeever were married in 1855 and with their six children came to this area sometime later. One son, W. E. McKeever, lived west of town. They were the parents of Mayme Fox (Mrs. R. L.); Earl; Gertrude Speedie (Mrs. Ralph) deceased; and Miss Edna. They lived in Gibson City upon retiring from the farm. Their land is still owned and farmed by their heirs.

4. **PETER MAIN** — Peter Main was born in Scotland and

came to the United States in 1854 and to Ford County in 1866 where he settled in Dixon Township, just east of Gibson City. He lived on the farm until his death in 1880. His son, Peter, took over the farm and was very prominent in the community until he passed away in 1931. He and Mrs. Main were parents of Russell (deceased); Lawrence; Ethel Woolley, and Elmer. Elmer's widow, Rachael Luther Main, still lives on the farm, since his death in 1966. The Main family has always been most active in church and community affairs.

5. **BENJAMIN MCCLURE** — Benjamin McClure, known as "Uncle Ben" was one of the well-known pioneers of Ford County in 1868. He came here from Indiana, living for a time near Springfield, Illinois, where he had laid a claim 8 miles east. He lived there for three years before coming to Ford

County, settling in Drummer Township some 9 miles northwest of Gibson City. He made his home here until 1876 when he moved from Gibson City leaving 156 acres of good land to his son, O. D. McClure, to operate. Later the farming of the land was assumed by "Uncle Ben's" great-grandson, Wallace McClure, who still lives on the homestead.

6. **OLIVER SHIRLEY** — Oliver Shirley was an honored veteran of the Civil War and an influential farmer in Drummer Township, where he came to live in 1869 from Logan County, Illinois. He married Mary F. Summer of Ohio in October, 1843. Three children were born to this couple — Harry; Elizabeth; and Oliver. He and his wife were prominent members of the First Christian Church in Gibson City. His son, Oliver, Jr., farmed the land after he retired; then it was passed on to his grandson, Robert.

7. **WILLIAM S. HUSTON** — William S. Huston was a native of Pennsylvania, born on February 1, 1849, on the same farm which was the birthplace of his father and grandfather. He was well-educated and after completing the public school, spent some time in the New London Academy in Pennsylvania. He located in Drummer Township in 1876, purchasing a quarter section of land at \$35 per acre. He later increased his holdings to 480 acres. He married Miss Mary Foley and was the father of two sons — J. Walter; and Frederick, who died in 1929. A grandson, Howard, now farms the homestead.

8. **CRAIG GILMORE** — Craig Gilmore was born in Harrison County, Ohio, in January, 1837, son of Nathaniel and Mary Craig Gilmore. The parents were adherents of the United Presbyterian Church and were prominent and highly-respected farmers. On March 25, 1869, he married Mary E. Richey and they were parents of Edwin S.; John R.; Anna M.; Ida B.; and Craig M. Mr. Gilmore was one of the influential men in the building of the Presbyterian Church in Gibson City. His land lies north of Gibson City, and the estate is being farmed by Fred, a grandson.

9. **ALBERT GILMORE** — Albert Gilmore was also a son of Nathaniel and Mary Craig Gilmore. He came to Ford County in 1870. In connection with general farming, he engaged in stock raising, making a specialty of high-grade cattle. On February 18, 1880, Mr. Gilmore married Elizabeth Boundy of Peoria. They were parents of four children — Samuel; Emma J.; Lilly M.; and Cynthia M. He was a self-made man who worked himself up to a position of affluence. His land is still owned by his grandson, Arthur Gilmore.

10. **DAVID GREEN** — David Green, one of the early and prosperous farmers in the vicinity, came to the county in 1870 and settled on a farm south of town, now known as the Denne land. He came from Ohio where he had married Miss Augustus Haines. They were the parents of 13 children. Besides farming, Mr. Green manufactured "Green's Golden Syrup," made of the sugar cane grown on his farm. His oldest son, Herbert, lived at home until 1883 when he married Amanda Fox of Chapin, Illinois. They started farming on a farm south of town and in 1890 bought the Bowker estate

which is on present Route 47. It later was registered as the "Maple Grove Farm." At that time, the farm was a swamp and much tiling had to be done to make it a profitable farm. This tiling was done, all by hand, with tile produced on the Jordan farm just north of Green's. Herbert and Amanda were the parents of Blanche, who died at age 6 in 1890; Grace (widow of Dr. Earl Briggs) in California; Mary Young, deceased; Raymond; Addie, (widow of Albert Burns) Indiana; and Lee of Alberta, Canada. They lived on the farm until 1919 when they built a new home across Route 47 and moved there upon retirement. It was then that Raymond brought in his bride, Marion Hyde of Rantoul, to move into the homestead and assume the farming. This was after Raymond had served 9 months in World War I. They raised their three children, Alice, (now Mrs. J. A. Siegfried of Scottsdale, Arizona); Herbert H.; and Marianne, (now Mrs. Jack Greyer of Aurora) in the home where he was born and raised. Besides farming, he was a breeder of registered Belgian horses, having accompanied D. K. Roth to Belgium in 1919 for his original breeding stock. When tractors replaced horses, he turned his attention to become the owner and breeder of a fine herd of registered Maple Grove Guernseys — one of the best herds in the state. Fire destroyed the modern, newly-remodeled dairy barn and milking parlor in 1959. It was then that he and his son, Herbert, decided to dispose of the herd. By this time, Herbert had assumed the farming of the land upon the retirement of his father, Herbert, who is the fourth generation of Greens on this farm came in 1949 to the home his grandfather had built in 1919. His wife is Mary McLaughlin of Decatur, and their family consists of Kathy, James, and Barbara. He raises Pioneer hybrid seed corn and fattens cattle. Through the years, Maple Grove Farm has always been an "Open House" for relatives and friends. The occupants are most active in the Methodist Church and community affairs.

11. **JOHN FOSTER** — John Foster came to Ford County in 1873 and bought a farm west of Gibson City, which was taken over by his son, John S. Foster, in 1893. In 1897, John S. was married to Ella Vaughn of Gibson City, whose father was a dealer in farm machinery. They were parents of four children — John V., deceased; Helen Foster Kelly, in homestead; Ella Corine, deceased; and Stanhope B. Foster, who lives nearby and oversees the farming of the land.

12. **D. K. ROTH** — Dan and Leanna Mossiman Roth came from Morton to this area in 1901 and moved to the Fulton farm south of town, which is still in the Roth estate. He was a progressive farmer and at one time did most of the threshing for the farmers here. In 1911, he made the first of three trips to Belgium, accompanied by his young neighbor, Raymond Green, to purchase horses. They bought 20 young mares and a stallion to start his breeding herd. In 1923, he started the "Corn Belt Hatchery and Feed Mill". This proved most successful and became an important industry in Gibson City. In 1937, he started a herd of registered angus cattle which grew to be one of the best herds in the state. The Roth family consists of Lelia Pannabacker of Peoria, deceased; Frieda Roth Greenan, Scottsdale, Arizona; Waldo, Florida; Harold, Scottsdale, Arizona; Anita Roth Conrad, Scottsdale, Arizona; and Helen Roth Francis of Gibson City. Always a public benefactor, Mr. and Mrs. Roth donated a farm toward the building cost of the Gibson City Community Hospital in 1951. The grandson of D. K. Roth, Eugene Roth, now lives on the Roth farm and farms the estate.



The first 2 - row cultivators (using three horses) came into use about 1915. With weather not too hot for the horses, a man could cultivate 15 acres a day. The one - row cultivators (using two horses) took twice as

long. Picture was taken on a farm about five miles south of Gibson City which was then farmed by the grandfather of John Summers.



This threshing scene was taken about 1890 when the steam engine was used. With this outfit the straw was carried away from the separator on a canvas conveyor that oscillated and the straw was stacked by two men. These stacks were shaped so as to shed water and preserve the feed for horses and cattle through the winter.



A threshing scene taken in 1900 shows the oats bundles being hauled to the separator on hay racks. The straw was blown out from the separator. Straw was placed around by the two

men shown on stack. The wives of the men were kept busy preparing noon and evening meals for the 30 - man crew.

M. T. Burwell
John H. Collier
Dr. Davis
Dr. Hoover
Andrew Jordan
Samuel J. LeFevre
Jonathon B. Lott
Emmanuel Lowry
Evan Mattinson
Jacob C. Mellinger
Wm. Moyer
Negro Citizens
Samuel P. Rady
John Adams Rockwood
Lewis Rockwood
Dr. Talbert B. Strauss
Michael Sullivant
Nelson B. Tyler
James H. White
Dr. Wiley
Wm. J. Wilson
George W. Wood

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SKETCHES

M. T. BURWELL, a native of Clark County, Ohio arrived in the village of Gibson in the spring of 1873 and opened the first bank in one of the small frame buildings just south of the Illinois Central depot on Sangamon avenue. Two years later he moved to a wooden building north of Union Hall.

In 1878, his brother - in - law, William J. Wilson of Clark County joined the banking firm, which then moved to a brick building at the corner of Sangamon and Ninth St., which Mr. Burwell had constructed. Mr. Burwell retired from the banking firm in 1882 but had interests in other businesses, owning several buildings including the Bank building, the Burwell Hotel, just east of the bank (part of which is now occupied by the Hunt Insurance Agency) and the Burwell Opera House where many social and civic events were held. The stage there was as fine as some in large cities and many shows and opera companies appeared there.

Mr. Burwell married Miss Isabelle Goodfellow in Clark Co., Ohio. They were parents of several children. The Burwells moved to Kansas City about the mid - 90s. While visiting her sister Mrs. Wilson, Mrs. Burwell died on March 3, 1898. Mr. Burwell passed away in Kansas City in 1908.

JOHN H. COLLIER, pioneer hardware merchant in the village of Gibson since 1871, was a native of Oneida County, N. Y. where he was born in 1844. His father came from England with his parents at the age of nine. In 1855 the Collier family migrated to Lake County, Illinois. John was the oldest of eight children.

When only 18 years of age, he enlisted in Company D, 96th Illinois Infantry. He was twice wounded but served until the end of the war. He then returned to Antioch Lake County and engaged in merchandising until 1871 when he came to Gibson and opened the first hardware store in partnership with H. J. Ring.

Mr. Collier held various public offices including Supervisor of Drummer Township, Board of Trustees of Town, elected and twice re - elected to the General Assembly of Ford and Livingston Counties and First Commander of Lott Post No. 70 G A R.

On May 5, 1875, the Hon. Mr. Collier married Miss Harriett McClure and to this union two children were born, Ben in 1878 and Kate in 1882.



DR. JOSHUA C. DAVIS, pioneer physician and farmer, came to Drummer Grove in the spring of 1854 and built his house at the south edge of the grove. At that time there was not a house to be seen as far as the eye could reach.

He was a native of Dublin, Ohio, where he grew to manhood, and in early life began the study of medicine, later graduating from the Cincinnati Eletric Medical College. Soon after graduation he went to practice medicine in Rodney and Grand Gulf, Miss. and remained there during the cholera epidemic while many other doctors fled the area. While in

Mississippi, Dr. Davis was united in marriage with Miss Ellen Hall, a native of Indiana. About 1849, Dr. Davis moved with his family to Saybrook, Illinois where he practiced for a few years. He bought land in Ford County as he accumulated means and moved his family 25 miles to the east, across the prairie to Drummer Grove in 1854.

Dr. Davis was an excellent physician and had an extensive practice, never refusing to answer a call when needed, regardless of the weather or time, making his rounds on horse - back, by cart, wagon and later in the only buggy in the town.

Dr. Davis acquired land as he had the means and owned 700 acres at one time. He was also agent for much of the land in the area and it was through him that Jonathan B. Lott purchased the land that became the site of the village of Gibson.

Dr. and Mrs. Davis were the parents of eight children, five boys and three girls. As the children grew older and needed schooling, Dr. Davis hired a teacher, Miss Mary Ann George, to teach them in his home and invited his pioneer neighbors to send their children there also. In 1866, he helped build a school house at the Grove on his land. The foundation stones were visible there for many years.

The family remained on the farm until 1875 when financial reverses forced the sale of the land. They then moved into the village. In 1881, Dr. and Mrs. Davis moved to Bloomington and two years later to Chicago where a son lived.

Dr. Davis, pioneer physician and settler, is honored by a memorial gift in his name to the Gibson Community Hospital by members of the family of his great - granddaughter, Mrs. Frank Hunt, Jr. The Plaque was placed on the door of the Medical Records room.

DR. W. A. HOOVER came to Gibson City in September 1886 to practice dentistry. He continued his practice in the same location for 50 years. His office was located in the brick building erected by J. L. Saxton at the corner of Sangamon Ave. and 9th Street. He sold his practice to Dr. H. P. Workman in October 1936.

Dr. Hoover came here from Greenville, Ohio. He graduated from the University of Michigan. He married the former Laura E. Hoover, August 29, 1887. She changed only one letter in her last name when she married Dr. Hoover. They were the parents of one daughter, Sibyl, who married O. R. Middleton (both were attorneys). Mrs. Middleton still resides in Gibson City. The Hoovers adopted a daughter, Josephine. She married Thomas Pullen and now resides in Indian Rock Beach, Fla.



Andrew Jordan

ANDREW JORDAN, with his wife and their year old son arrived in this part of Drummer Township in the spring of 1854 and settled on the land which they had purchased and is still owned by their great grandchildren.

Mr. Jordan was born near Louisville, Ky. in 1828. When 21 years of age he went to Cass Co., Illinois working as a farm hand at \$18 a month until he had saved enough money to buy 100 acres of land in Champaign County. There he married Miss Amanda Devore and two years later sold their land and moved to the Ford County land there they remained until they retired and moved to town.

Those first years were hard ones; Mrs. Jordan walking behind the plow, dropping seed corn in the furrow while carrying a baby, nor was any work on a farm an easy task for man or woman.

The Jordans were the parents of five children -- William, James, John, Charles and Elizabeth. Many of their descendants still live in this area.

Religious services were held in their home from the earliest days until churches were established in the village. Mr. Jordan set aside a plot of ground for a burying ground, the first in the area. Most of the graves were moved to the Drummer Township Cemetery after it was established in 1876.

Large deposits of gravel were found on his land and Mr. Jordan opened pits and operated the largest tile and brick factory in the area. The tile was used near and far to drain the wet swampy land and the bricks were used in the building of the stores and houses in the town.

Mr. and Mrs. Jordan were members of the First Christian Church and gave the brick used in the building of that church many years ago.



SAMUEL J. LEFEVRE, a native of Ohio came with his parents, Dr. W. C. and Martha Jewet LeFevre to their farm in Drummer Township, Ford County in 1856. On August 13, 1862, he enlisted as a member of Company K, 76th Regiment of Illinois Infantry and served as a non-commissioned officer until near the close of the war. He received a gun-shot wound on the last day's fight of the war on April 9, 1865. Mr. LeFevre was married to Miss Laura A. Carver in 1866, a native of Norton, Mass. They were the parents of two daughters, Anna J. and Mary Etta.

Mr. LeFevre remained on the home farm until 1872 when he moved into the little village that had grown up in sight of his home, and there engaged in lumber and coal business. In 1891-92 he erected an electric light plant and brought lights to the homes and streets of the little city.

Mr. LeFevre served in many offices of the town and township - Supervisor, on the first village board, school trustee, school treasurer, and other important assignments.

The LeFevres gave a play ground for the children just north of the Methodist Church where there is a marker to their memory.



J. B. Lott

JONATHAN B. LOTT was born in 1839, in Licking County, Ohio, and came with his parents to McLean County in 1847 where he grew up on a farm. When the Civil War broke out, he, with a friend and a classmate, Joseph Fifer, who became the Governor of Illinois, enlisted in Company C, of the Thirty-third Illinois Infantry and served together throughout the war. They were discharged about the same time in 1865 and afterward attended Illinois Wesleyan University, Bloomington.

On Jan. 1, 1867 Mr. Lott was united in marriage with Miss Margaret S. Gibson in Bloomington. In 1869, they purchased 225 acres of land in Section 11 of Drummer township, Ford County, and moved there that spring. Their first dwelling was a 12 x 14 foot boxcar that had been moved 16 miles across the prairie from Paxton. This was "fixed up" to live in while their cottage was being built. Joseph Fifer spent several weeks with them that summer and said it was all quite comfortable with lean-tos added on the sides.

Mr. Lott, with his brother, James, platted the village that first year. The map was ready for registration on Nov. 4, 1870. He chose the name of Gibson for the village in honor of his wife, Margaret Gibson.

Mr. Lott had recognized the value of transportation and knowing of the plans to build railroads through the area, had contacted many people. With the help of influential friends, they were able to induce the builders of the Gilman, Clinton and Springfield railroad to come through Mr. Lott's land and the Lafayette, Bloomington and Mississippi road to intersect it at this place. Then later, in 1874, the Paducah and Co. changed its route and came through the village of Gibson also. Mr. Lott did more in securing transportation in every

direction for this village than many a person has done for a much larger city.

He established a real estate business and did many things to promote the growth and welfare of the town, but lived but ten short years before death followed a severe illness on Sept. 18, 1879. He was sincerely mourned by all of the townspeople.

Mrs. Margaret Lott continued to make her home in the town where she was active in community and church work. She was fond of children and in the early days taught a large class of young folks in Union Hall, doing many special things for them. She continued to be interested in the people of the community as long as she lived. In 1886, she became the wife of Mr. O. A. Damon. She passed away in August, 1924, at the age of 80 years.

EMMANUEL LOWRY, editor and proprietor of the Gibson Courier, became a resident of Ford County and the village of Gibson in 1875. He was born in Somerset County, Pa. in 1837, a son of Michail and Salome (Moyer) Lowry. Emmanuel received his primary education in the common schools of his native county and then took a classical course in Bethany College in West Virginia. He served a regular apprenticeship to the printer's trade in Somerset, Pa., and then spent some years in teaching in the public and Normal schools in the county. In 1870, Mr. Lowry bought a half interest in a paper in Wadsworth, Ohio where he worked for one year then going to Eureka, Illinois. In 1875 he came to Gibson, purchasing the "Courier" which he continued publishing.

Mr. Lowry was united in marriage with Miss Phoebe Colborn at Somerset, Pa. in September, 1862. She was a successful teacher in the public schools of her native county and well fitted to be a help-mate in her husband's career. They were the parents of seven children, four living. Charles (in the Courier office), James P., John A., and Russel. Emmanuel Lowry died April 25, 1907; Phoebe on Oct. 15, 1907. The Lowry sons, Charles and J. Percy, published the Gibson Courier for many years, merging with the Enterprise in 1933. They sold their interest in the newspaper to George Woolley and his son John in 1940.

EVAN MATTINSON was born in 1857 in Clark County, Ohio, where he received his education and engaged in farming until 1880 when he came to Gibson City. He was first employed as a clerk in the banking house of Burwell and Co. In March 1885 he was united in marriage to Miss Minnie Belle Wilson, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Wilson. They were the parents of one child, Clarence. Mr. Mattinson became a member of the banking firm of Mattinson, Wilson and Co. upon the retirement of Mr. Burwell and the re-organization of the firm.

In 1871, **JACOB C. MELLINGER**, in partnership with his father, purchased 960 acres of land adjoining the village of Gibson to the north. In 1873, Mr. and Mrs. Mellinger moved to the village where he erected a fine house and large stables at the north edge of the village on the west side of Sangamon Ave. They were natives of Lancaster County, Ohio. Mr. Mellinger engaged in extensive live stock raising and trading then later in farming.

The Mellingers were the parents of two sons. Dello who died quite young, and Frank. They also had an adopted daughter Louise, who became ill and died while in college.

Mr. Mellinger was active in civic affairs. He was a director of the Building and Loan Association, also of the Gibson Land Improvement Company. While serving as High-

way Commissioner, promoted the graveling of the first mile of road in the township.

Mr. Mellinger deeded six acres of land to the city for a park, which was located one block east of his home. This was known then as Mellinger Park, a name long since forgotten, now just "North Park". He platted a few lots for sale across the street west of the park. When houses were built there, they became known as the "Silk Stocking Row". The Mellingers returned to Ohio in 1893. The Mellinger Pasture land to the north of town was the "Town Cow Pasture." Probably very few people living today can remember the days when "town people" kept a cow in a barn back of their houses and in the summer time hired a boy to drive the cow to pasture and back, from May first to late October in time for evening milking. That was one way for boys to earn some "hard to come by" pocket money in those days, and if he were lucky, he might get two cows to drive to pasture. The football field and all the new houses have long since taken over the "Old Cow Pasture".

WILLIAM MOYER was the first commercial businessman in the village of Gibson. On December 1, 1870, in one of the small frame buildings south of the Illinois Central railroad depot. There is no biographical record of the Moyers and the only relative they had was a niece of Mr. Moyer's; Mrs. John Smith who lived on North Church Street in later years. "Mr. Moyer was a man of superior judgment and discretion and by strict attention to management in business, accumulated a fortune, which caused him to be recognized as the wealthiest man in town."

Mr. Moyer was generous to the town where he had accumulated his wealth and gave several substantial gifts to the city, including the first library at the intersection of Sangamon and Ninth streets. The new library still bears his name. He gave many other gifts to churches and charitable causes. Mrs. Moyer died in 1888 after which Mr. Moyer moved to Bloomington where he passed away Oct. 25, 1914.



Mrs. Percy Miner (center) and her two daughters, Bernice (at left) and Cynthia took part in the promenade in downtown Gibson City last Saturday afternoon. Promenades are scheduled each Saturday at 2 p.m. Everyone in the community is urged to take part in these activities.

EARLY NEGRO CITIZENS

Very early in the history of Gibson, a number of Negro people came from the Sullivant Farm of Burr Oaks, now the Sibley Estate. Some of them had been born in slavery, and nearly all had come from Tennessee to work at the Sullivant farm.

The circumstances of their choosing Gibson City as a permanent residence are interesting. Michael Sullivant, who purchased 40,000 acres in what is now Sullivant Township in 1865 for \$3.50 an acre, sent his farm overseer or foreman, John M. Miner, to Tennessee to hire Negro men to work at Burr Oaks, one-half mile south and east of what is now Sibley. It was in March, 1870, when he went on this mission and hired about 20 men, who came to Paxton by train, where he took them to a restaurant for dinner. They were then taken to a clothing store, where they were outfitted with warm clothing, underwear, shirts, pants, coats, caps, shoes, mittens, etc., for winter wear, for which they were ill equipped. Plans had been made to meet them by wagon at the train, then spend the night at a farm sleeping in a barn under heavy blankets, and finishing the trip the next day. The next morning the men were taken by the drivers with two wagons with four mules hitched to each one because of the mud, and the 20 miles to Burr Oaks were finished in this fashion, driving through mud and slush all the way.

The Negro men proved efficient workers, and were employed on the same basis as the 250 white men who were already working at the efficiently managed Burr Oaks farm. Later on wives and children joined the men, and when Burr Oaks farm was lost in the 1875 money panic, some of them settled in Gibson City. They bought small homes, sent their children to school, and in 1877 established a church, the African Methodist Episcopal, and erected their church building in 1879. In recent years this church has been known as Alexander Chapel. Rev. Aaron Ward assisted in organizing this church and was the first minister.

Among those early pioneer families were Mr. and Mrs. William McConnell, (also referred to as McConnell) and those who remember them will know that he could whistle most musically. Their daughter, Beulah McConnell, married Walter Johnson of Gibson, who became a medical doctor and practiced in Chicago for many years. Another daughter, Zephie, married Pearl Johnson of Pontiac. They lived in Gibson City and were parents of five children, all of whom graduated from Gibson High School: Lois, Pearl, Jr., Julian (deceased), Wilbur and Maxine. Wilbur served as custodian at the new high school for several years and now resides in Decatur. Maxine is a much-traveled person who sang with world-renowned bands and traveled around the world as soloist with the bands. She is presently nursing in Chicago but maintains her residence in Gibson City at 627 North Melvin.

Two of the McConnell sons entered the medical profession and practiced in Chicago, James McConnell as a doctor and Charles as a dentist.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Green, also were early residents. For many years he was the janitor at the school. Among other of those early families were the Robert Huddlesons, Ged Rankins and George Morton families.

A Civil War veteran was Gilbert Jordan. He worked for the city and always paraded with the GAR in Memorial Day parades. His son Mose was a dining car steward, and son Benny was a veteran of World War I.

James J. Kibble, who came to Gibson City and lived with Rev. Aaron Ward, was at one time janitor at the school. His daughter, Miss Alberta Kibble, still resides at 506 North

Guthrie. S. S. Mitchell, a barber, was among those who came from Burr Oaks. Benjamin Thomas was also an early barber here.

The Mark Anthony family was perhaps the best known. Mr. Anthony was a barber. He was unanimously elected to the office of city clerk after the village had grown in size considerably. He served from May 1, 1880, to April 30, 1881. "Aunt Millie Young" was Mrs. Anthony's mother and was a nurse. She was much loved.

Page Price was a Civil War veteran. His wife, Addie Price, who always said she was born in slavery, was a cateress and much in demand.

The Stokes and Fields families did not come to Gibson with the Burr Oaks people. Thomas and Sarah Stokes came "on their own" from Tennessee. They were parents of several sons and daughters, all of whom were successful and respected citizens. They purchased all of the "100 block" on North Guthrie and resided there. This block was known as Stokes Hill. Two of their grandsons were Thomas Fields and Sam Fields. Mrs. Mary Thomas Fields, wife of Sam Fields, still resides in the Stokes Hill block at 114 North Guthrie. Their son, LeRoy Fields, graduated from Gibson High School in 1929, attended the University of Illinois, and graduated from Bradley University. He is teaching Special Education in Elgin and resides in Chicago.

Tommyetta Stokes, aunt of Thomas and Sam Fields, was the first Negro graduate of Gibson City High School. She graduated from nursing school and was supervisor of Providence Hospital in Chicago. She later married Rev. Beckman of Springfield.

The George Fields family came from Bloomington. George "Turk" Fields met and married Laura Stokes in Pontiac, and from there they came to Gibson City. They were parents of nine children. Mr. Fields followed the trade of drayman. He conducted a lunch stand at the canning company during canning season and was known as an excellent cook. In October, 1880, he was involved in an accident at the Eggleston and Spaulding tile factory, which claimed the lives of two other workmen. This factory was located in the west part of town near the junction of the then Lake Erie, Western, and Wabash railroads. Fortunately, Mr. Fields escaped serious injury.

Two of the well-remembered citizens of Gibson City who were children of the George Fields were Thomas and Sam Fields. Thomas worked as custodian at the First National Bank for 31 years and in the old Building and Loan for 20 years. He and his wife, Cora Burris Fields, lived in the same house on Lott Boulevard all of their married life, where Mrs. Fields still resides at 309 South Lott. She was the granddaughter of Solomon Fowler, who lived on a farm for many years on the Sibley Estate.

Sam Fields was a mason. He built many of the business houses as well as dwellings in Gibson City and was the mason for the present Lamb Funeral Home.

Thomas and Sam Fields had a brother, William Fields, who graduated from Gibson High School and was a dentist for many years in Chicago.

As shown in this factual account of the early Negroes of Gibson City, they contributed to the spiritual, cultural, social, business, and industrial growth in the early days of the town. Their good citizenship has enriched the life of Gibson, leaving happy memories in the minds of many of the present older residents of Gibson who knew them personally and remember them with affection.



SAMUEL P. RADY, pioneer lawyer, was born in New Albany, Ind. in 1853. His parents died when he was a small child. He was reared by an older brother and received his education in the local schools, then attended law college in Ohio.

He arrived in Gibson City in September of 1881 and served as superintendent of the schools for one year before opening his law office, which he shared with Link Phillips for a few years. Later he moved into his own office over the First National Bank where he maintained an office until his death in 1906. His wife died in 1957. Mr. Rady was united in marriage with Miss Lillian L. Palmer Oct. 13, 1885 in North Hillsdale, N. Y. Their first home was at 608 East 13th St. in Gibson City. There were the parents of three children, Chloe, Ivy and Samuel. Their daughter Chloe, assisted her father in his law office from early teen - age. She and Samuel still reside in Gibson.

In 1900 Mr. Rady purchased 40 acres of land from J. D. Mellinger that lay between Melvin and Church streets and 15th and 19th streets and planned a new addition for the town to be called "College Hill." In 1903 this land was surveyed and streets were constructed. In 1905 cement sidewalks were laid and trees planted along each street. Lots were for sale in the new addition.

When it became necessary to build a new high school, Mr. Rady deeded Block 8 in the College Hill Addition to Drummer Township High School for a site for the high school which was completed in 1914.

JOHN ADAMS ROCKWOOD lived in LaSalle Co., Illinois until 1863 when he moved his family to Normal, Illinois. In 1872 they sold their home there and moved to a farm in Drummer Township, later moving to the village. The Rockwoods were the parents of three children, Lewis, Ralph, Gertrude (wife of William McKeever) and an adopted daughter, Mamie, who married Walter Mottier.

LEWIS ROCKWOOD received his education in the schools at Normal and taught school before entering the employ of the Mattinson, Wilson and Co. banking firm where he achieved the position of cashier. He was twice married, first to Miss Florence Moffett in 1884 in Paxton. She died Nov. 1 in 1885 and on May 9, 1889, he married Miss Ida Baerd and to them was born one son Roscoe in 1890.

DR. TALBERT B. STRAUSS was born in Wayne Co., Ohio Nov. 6, 1845 and received his high school education in Frederickburg. He enlisted in Company D of the 120th Infantry and engaged in the battle of Vicksburg.

In 1864 he moved to Paxton, Illinois and studied under Dr. J. M. Waters, formerly of Gibson. After three years of

private study he entered Rush Medical College, was licensed in 1878 and located in Gibson.

In 1869 Dr. Strauss married Miss Anna George to whom two sons were born, Vernon and Bryson. In 1872 the mother died and in 1878 Dr. Strauss was wed to Sarah E. McKeever. They were the parents of three children, Ethel M., Elizabeth W., and Charles E.

MICHAEL SULLIVAN began the operation of his 42,600 acre farm in 1866 with headquarters at Burr Oaks, 10 miles north of where the future village of Gibson would be located. There were at times as many as 300 men employed at this farm, some of them having families.

This farm was nationally known as the "largest corn farm in the world". Before the Chicago and Paducah railroad was constructed through the big farm this corn crop was hauled to the railroads in Gibson and shipped to market in the east, also some to Chicago.

There was a great demand for the prairie hay which was baled at the farm and hauled to the east - bound trains. During the haying season as many as 30 carloads a week would be shipped. This meant much to business in the village.

Several of the people living at Burr Oaks established homes in Gibson City or on farms near by after that farm was taken over by Hiram Sibley.

NELSON B. TYLER was one of the early merchants of Gibson, having come to the village in the summer of 1872 and opening a grocery store on the "north end" of the main street.

He was born in Lake County, Illinois, but went with his parents to their old home in New York State when he was three years old, returning to Illinois in 1864. When less than 20 years of age he came to the village of Gibson and opened a grocery store in the "north end", later putting in a stock of general merchandise. Mr. Tyler continued in this occupation until 1885 when he became a salesman for a prominent Chicago firm.

Mr. Tyler was married in 1897 to Miss Lottis R. Palmer in North Hillsdale, a native of New York State. They were the parents of two daughters, Charlotte and Florence. (Mrs. Florence Tyler Rich, who still resides in the city.)

JAMES H. WHITE, a pioneer grocer, who continued in business in the same location for a quarter of a century, was born in Scotland in 1858. The family immigrated to the United States of America in 1865 and settled in Pennsylvania. He went to work in a twine factory in Xenia, Ohio in 1875, then came to Gibson in 1879 where he opened a small grocery store and continued in the business until his death. He was a progressive businessman and citizen. In 1880 Mr. White married Miss Rachael Thompson of Xenia, Ohio. They were the parents of two daughters, Maud Ellen and Ethel Agnes.

DR. THOMAS R. WILEY, a pioneer physician and surgeon of Gibson City, was born near Colfax in McLean Co., Illinois. His father, Lyttle R. Wiley was a native of Kentucky and his mother was from Indiana. They came to Illinois in 1840.

Thomas Wiley was reared on the farm and after finishing preparatory school, took a full college course at Illinois Wesleyan University, graduating with the class of 1871. He then began the study of medicine with Dr. Hill of Bloomington and later took a course of lectures at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. His next affiliation was with Rush Medical College in Chicago graduating with the class of 1874. In March of 1874, Dr. Wiley established a practice in Gibson City which he continued with marked success. In June 1874 he married Miss Mattie E. Reeves of LeRoy, Illinois. Dr. and Mrs. Wiley were the parents of one child, Beulah Belle. The doctor filled various official offices -

President of Village Board, school board, Building and Loan Association, and other responsible positions and was also active in church and community affairs. (Beulah Wiley married Dr. Frank Hunt, a veterinarian.) Many of the Wiley's descendants reside in the community.

WILLIAM J. WILSON a native of Clark County, Ohio, received his education in the schools of that state and there married Miss Lydia Goodfellow in 1863. He engaged in farming. In 1876 they moved to Gibson City where Mr. Wilson was in the grain business until his elevator burned. He then joined the banking firm of his brother-in-law, M. T. Burwell. He also was an extensive land-owner in the area and had business interests in other institutions. Mr. and Mrs. Wilson were the parents of ten children.

GEORGE W. WOOD, pioneer carpenter in Gibson was born in Bloomington, Ind. in 1847 and came to Illinois when a young man where he engaged in farming near Colfax until 1872. He then came to the village of Gibson. From that time he followed the carpenter trade until his death in 1942.

He was the only carpenter who could claim the distinction of working on every church that was built in the town during his lifetime, beginning with the Methodist Church in 1872. This church was destroyed by fire in February 1888. Mr. Wood then helped build the second Methodist Church and the present one which was dedicated in 1914.

He also assisted in the building of many of the older houses and building establishments in the town.

Mr. Wood was one of the pall-bearers for the burial of Mrs. Bowker, the first person to be buried in Drummer Township Cemetery in 1876.

Mr. Wood was married to Louisa DuBois. They were the parents of two daughters, the elder died in infancy. Etta, aged 90, lives at 805 East Jefferson St., Bloomington, Ill. She walks five blocks to attend Wesley Methodist Church. Mrs. Wood died Dec. 1889; Mr. Wood in Dec. 1914.



Peterson Greenhouse and Residence, Gibson City, Ill.



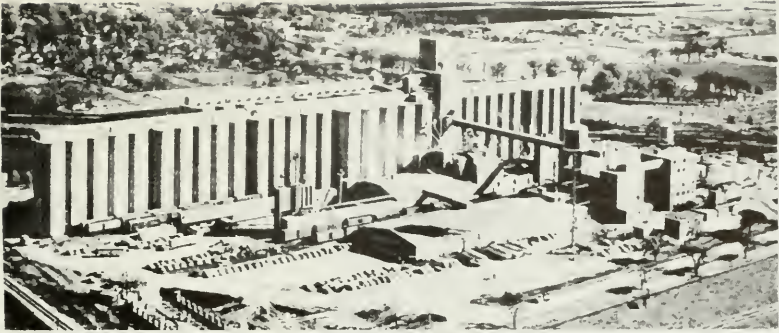
THE R. C. INN, GIBSON CITY, ILLINOIS—FAMOUS FOR GOOD FOOD



GIBSON CITY CANNING FACTORY

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McMILLEN FEED MILLS
Gibson City, Illinois

**CENTRAL SOYA COMPANY
AND McMILLEN FEED MILLS**

The Central Soya story began Oct. 2, 1934, when -- in the midst of a depression -- Dale W. McMillen at the age of 54 incorporated the Central Soya Company to process soybeans for oil and meal.

On Dec. 8, 1934, the first shipment of soybean oil was made from the small plant in which the company operated in Decatur, Indiana. On January 23, 1935, McMillen Feed Mills, which had been incorporated as the feed division of Central Soya, received its first order for feed -- 46,350 pounds of mixed feed. . . . "Master Mixing Feed - 30 percent molasses."

From this small beginning, the company grew rapidly and by mid - summer of 1939 plans were completed for the construction of soybean processing, feed manufacturing and grain storage facilities at Gibson City, Illinois.

Construction began in August, 1939, and was completed in October of that year.

Only 28 people were on the payroll when the plant opened. It was their job to operate a facility that included 10 concrete silos with a storage capacity of a million bushels, a then - modern feed mill with a production capacity of 4,000 tons of feed per month, and an expeller - type soybean processing operation with a 5,000 bushel processing capacity per day.

The little company continued to grow and by the end of 1942 soybean processing capacity at Gibson City was increased to 10,000 bushels per day, while storage capacity had nearly doubled to 1,900,000 bushels.

By 1945 an average of 233 persons were employed at the Gibson City plant and the annual payroll was estimated at \$400,000. By 1949, further expansion of storage capacity had increased total storage to more than six million bushels and employment had climbed to 260 persons.

Today, storage capacity at Gibson City is 6½ million bushels, soybean processing capacity has reached 27,500 bushels per day, and the feed mill has a rated capacity for its two continuous feed lines of an 800 tons per eight - hour day.

Approximately 250 people are now employed at the Gibson City plant and the annual payroll is just under two million dollars.

The growth of the Gibson City plant is typical of other phases of Central Soya and McMillen Feed Mills operations.

A number of other plants have been acquired or built, and

warehouses and grain merchandising facilities serve customers.

A marine department operates a fleet of jumbo river barges for transporting soybeans, grains and other feed ingredients on the inland waterway system.

Over the years the company's operations have been greatly diversified.



Peter Schertz and son Jesse operated the above business from 1907 to 1925. Henry Hager purchased the lumber yard in 1925, and was later joined by sons Douglas and Jim in the 1950's.



ILLINOIS BELL TELEPHONE COMPANY



TELEPHONES

The telephone was a bit late in coming to Gibson City.

Located in the heartland of Illinois corn country, at a considerable distance by horse- and - buggy from any of the state's larger cities, Gibson City folks soon realized that if they ever hoped to see one of those new - fangled talking instruments, they would have to take the initiative in sparking the interest of local entrepreneurs and pulling together some financial backing of their own.

Even so, it was only 20 years or so after the Alexander Graham Bell invention that the first private venture got underway.

George Schlosser, a local man, set up the first switchboard in 1898 and began selling telephone service. The operation, known as the Central Telephone and Telegraph Co., appears to have been a partnership involving both Gibson City and nearby Paxton.

Schlosser's partner on the Paxton end was a Mr. Lankford. But for one reason or another, the two men decided to dissolve their partnership after two years. Schlosser retained Gibson City and Lankford continued to operate in Paxton.

Despite the split, the prospects for a profitable business must have been highly encouraging. In 1901, Schlosser talked two other men - A. L. Phillips and H. A. Ball - into joining his enterprise and they capitalized a new company at \$12,000, a handsome sum in those days. Appropriately enough, they chose the name Gibson City Telephone Co.

Within a year the new company built a two - story and basement building at the corner of Eighth and Church Streets to house their growing business. The building would serve as the community telephone office for the next 60 years.

Even back in those days telephone companies required large amounts of capital for construction of new facilities. As new money came into the business, companies reorganized and names were changed. And so it was with Gibson City.

A few months after moving into the new telephone office, the company changed its name to Granger's Mutual Telephone Co., apparently representing a financial investment and share in control of management by Paxton interests.

Before another year had passed the name was changed once again - to the Gibson Home Telephone Co. - and the surviving organization was capitalized at \$25,000. With new money in the till, Gibson Home purchased the entire community exchange from the Paxton Telephone and Telegraph Co. And for the first time Gibson City residents were no longer faced with the expense of having to order telephones from each company in order to call all telephones in the community.

In the early days the Home company was managed by Schlosser under a license granted by Chicago's Central Union Telephone Co., the operating company which held the Bell telephone patent.

The arrangement with Central Union permitted Gibson City customers to use the Bell System long distance lines, thus saving the local company the prohibitive costs of building a separate toll network.

Telephone service apparently left considerable room for improvement. In 1909, The Messrs. D. A. Taylor, W. E. Crowe and W. E. Day, all of Gibson City, formed the Drummers Telephone Co. and entered into direct competition with the Home company.

Old newspaper clippings indicate the company was comprised primarily of local farmers who were dissatisfied with the Home service.

The Drummers company negotiated a franchise with the

Gibson City city council which provided for free calls on all lines constructed within 15 miles of the city. The free calling area included the communities of Fisher, Foosland, Belflower, Saybrook, Sibley, Melvin, Guthrie and Elliott.

The telephone business was highly competitive in the early 1900s, and once the novelty of the invention faded new business was hard to come by. Adopting a more aggressive stance, Chicago's Central Union transferred J. F. Stephens from its Springfield district to manage the Gibson City operation.

Stephens would serve as manager for nearly 30 years and, as much as any one man, is credited with extending and expanding the telephone network that formed the basis for the system serving Gibson City today.

Stephens had been a construction crew boss. Ahead lay the job of building the hundreds of miles of cable, wire and poles that made up a telephone network. Characteristically, Stephens didn't lose any time in getting down to business.

To help finance the construction program Stephens increased rates from \$2 a month to \$2.50, and boosted the local company's capitalization to \$50,000.

While monthly rates were about one - third of today's charge, customers could only reach about one - fiftieth of the telephones accessible now.

Telephone business progressed at a slow but measured pace over the next 10 years. In 1916, the number of Home Telephone customers stood at 850. The Drummers company appears to have hit on hard times, however, the folded.

Illinois Bell began its long association with Gibson City in 1924 with purchase of the assets of the Gibson Home Company. Records show the Home company operated 744 telephones, and provided service to another 46 owned by customers.

The February, 1925 issue of Illinois Bell Magazine, in introducing the Gibson City exchange to employees, described the community in these words:

"Gibson City is one of those 'downstate' towns that has energy enough for a city twice its size. But none too much for Gibson. They know how to use it."

The words turned out to be prophetic. Three months after Illinois Bell assumed control, one of the worst sleet storms in modern history struck central Illinois, toppling thousands of telephone poles and virtually isolating Gibson City from communication with the rest of the world.

Manager Stephens soon discovered just how much energy there was in Gibson City.

In a matter of hours he drew together an emergency force of 40 line - men and rented a number of automobiles to get the men out into the field.

Poles and lines were down as far away as Bloomington and Chenoa. Despite 16 hour work days and a repair force many times over the normal complement of men, it would be nearly a week before local service was restored. Long distance service wasn't fully restored until mid - summer 1925.

So much for the early years of "the coming of the telephone to Gibson City."

The last half - century has been one of orderly growth and technological innovation.

Crank - type wooden telephones began disappearing in the 1930s. More switching equipment was added to handle growth in the post - World War II years and the community converted to local and long distance direct dialing in 1960. Early this year Touch - Tone calling was introduced.

Much of the credit for Gibson City's emergence from "horse - and - buggy" telephone days to a modern 1970s

system belongs to W. M. "Sparky" Snead, a life - long resident and Illinois Bell's manager here for 20 years.

Sparky and his predecessor, J. F. Stephenson, stand out as the two most influential men in Gibson City telephone history. Stephenson brought the telephone through its early development; Snead picked up where Stephenson left off and forged the system serving the community today.

What do the next 50 years hold? The only limit is the stretch

of the imagination. Illinois Bell, looking ahead a scant 15 years, confidently foresees Gibson City with see - as - you - talk Picturephone and direct distance dialing around the world with calls carried via satellites. Everyday business, such as banking and grocery shopping, will be done by Touch - Tone telephone and computers.

After that, it's anyone's guess!



DeWall Seed and Implement Co. now The Corn Belt Hatcheries.



Early Businesses



Former Bryant's Drug Store

This page sponsored by
First National Bank in Paxton

GIBSON CITY COURIER SINCE 1873

Two-Time Winner of 'Outstanding Illinois Weekly' Award

The present Gibson City Courier is a descendant of two early newspapers, The Gibson Courier and The Gibson City Enterprise, which were merged in 1934.

The Courier was founded in May 1872 by N. E. Stevens of Paxton. He sold it Nov. 1, 1873, to Walter Hoge, who published the newspaper only a short time before he, in turn, sold it to Emanuel Lowry, who moved here from Eureka and took possession March 1, 1875.

E. Lowry, as the publisher and editor referred to himself in the masthead, was active for 25 years. Then The Courier passed on to brothers C. E. and J. P. Lowry, Emanuel's sons, who jointly published the newspaper for 35 years.

The Enterprise was founded in 1883 by P. A. Coal, well known in Republican circles throughout the state, and at one time postmaster of Gibson City. During the Nineties, Coal published a daily edition, which was finally discontinued, and the newspaper reverted to weekly publication, because the town wasn't large enough to support a daily paper.

In 1904 the Enterprise was purchased by Woolley Brothers of Saybrook, and George A. Woolley assumed active direction by moving here, and remaining its head for thirty years. About 1924 George bought out his brothers and became sole owner. His son, John, grew up in the business and joined his father as an assistant after he graduated from Drummer Township High School.

The two newspapers were merged on Saturday, May 12,

1934, and the first combined issued was published May 17 of that year, as "The Gibson Courier and Gibson City Enterprise."

The two printing plants were combined, and mailing lists merged, with a total circulation at that time of 2,025. George Woolley acquired stock in the Gibson Courier Printing Company, and with his son John joined the organization with C. E. and J. P. Lowry.

Later John Woolley assumed the ownership.

On Nov. 1, 1949, John Woolley sold the newspaper, known as The Gibson City Courier, to Verle V. Kramer, then of Warsaw, Ill., and his two sons, Donovan and David. At that time the Kramers owned the Fairbury Blade and Forrest News, and Donovan was in active charge of that operation. Verle sold his Warsaw Bulletin and moved to Gibson City to take charge of the Courier. In the early 1960s the Fairbury and Forrest newspapers were sold, and Donovan bought a newspaper in Casa Grande, Ariz. His interest as a partner was acquired by Verle and David Kramer, who operated as a partnership until the death of Verle Kramer Nov. 3, 1968. At that time, and now the Kramers published newspapers in Saybrook, Colfax, LeRoy, Chenoa and Lexington, and the two Monticello newspapers, merged as the Piatt County Journal - Republican.

Kramer Publishing Company is a partnership operation, with Mrs. Verle Kramer and David Kramer as the owners. The Bement Register was acquired in 1970.



VERLE KRAMER

1905 - 1968

This page sponsored by
Kramer Publishing Co.



LAMB FUNERAL HOME

"Old Timers" in the Gibson City area may recall the beautiful team pictured here - and some may even remember their names as "Doc" and "George". This represents a small part of the equipment that has been used through the years by W. S. Lamb & Co. in serving Gibson City.

W. S. Lamb came to our town in 1887, and became a furniture merchant. "Undertaking" was a specialty sideline in those days. After his death in 1917, the business was continued by his son Shum Lamb, and it was he who built the present funeral home in 1937. Following World War II, the third generation of Lamb Funeral Service continued with the management of Jack and Wally Lamb.

We are still grateful that Grandfather found such a good town as Gibson City to establish his business - and we pledge continuing good service to those that call on us in their time of need.

Wally Lamb
Bob Deener
Earl Young
Miss Lelia Cender

GIBSON FEDERAL SAVINGS AND LOAN ASSOCIATION

Gibson Federal Savings and Loan Association was founded June 18, 1883, 88 years ago. It was organized by ten pioneer businessmen. T. D. Spalding was the first President and L. E. Rockwood was the first Secretary. The name of Gibson Savings and Building Association was chosen and was organized under a State Charter. In 1936 the association was changed to a Federal Charter and the name was changed to Gibson Federal Savings and Loan Association. The office then was located at 127 N. Sangamon which is now part of the Ace Hardware Store. In September, 1960, we moved into our new building located at 402 N. Sangamon. We have enjoyed a very good business and as of now our assets are over 35 million.



FIRST NATIONAL BANK AND TRUST COMPANY IN GIBSON CITY

The original beginning of the First National Bank and Trust Company in Gibson City, Gibson City, Illinois, a leading institution, was in the year 1867.

Old newspapers and reports, no longer available, show that A. J. Montelius entered into the private banking business in Piper City, Illinois, in conjunction with another enterprise.

At some future date, (actual date unknown), this banking company was chartered as a State Bank.

In 1900, under new ownership, National Bank Charter No. 5322 was awarded, and the title was changed to the "First National Bank of Piper City".

In the 1941 the old "First National Bank of Gibson City" was liquidated and the First National Bank of Piper City, under Charter No. 5322, was moved to Gibson City, and the name changed to "First National Bank in Gibson City".

In June 1959 the bank moved from 134 North Sangamon Avenue, to its present location at 119 North Church Street, in Gibson City.

Under this title the bank flourished and grew with the community until June 1968, when the present management applied for and received a change in title to "First National Bank and Trust Company in Gibson City".



M & W GEAR COMPANY

Nearly 25 years ago, Elmo Meiners, an Anchor, Illinois farmer, got tired of nursing his tractors through a hard day's work. He and a friend converted an abandoned school house into a shop and pioneered an overdrive transmission that would give his tractor four more field speeds. The results were so good that neighbors and friends began clamoring for a gear set for their tractors.

In 1949, the M & W Gear Company was organized. Until 1951, operations continued in the old school building about four miles southeast of Anchor. The company then moved into Anchor where its headquarters remained until 1966.

M & W made its first appearance in Gibson City in August, 1956 with the acquisition of the Monnie Wagoner garage at 523 S. Sangamon. M & W's first manufacturing operations started there. In 1964, work began on the present plant on an 80 acre tract at the south edge of Gibson City. In Sept., 1965, the nearly completed plant was hit by a tornado that delayed occupancy for six months. It was March, 1966 before M & W completed the move into its new quarters. In the next four years, the original office and factory structure increased to a complex of nine modern buildings with a total floor space of over 200,000 square feet.

M & W's entry into large scale manufacturing was simultaneous with the move into its new plant. Previously, M & W had concentrated on "after - market" products; accessories designed to improve the performance or cut the cost of operating farm equipment manufactured by other companies. Prominent among these were pistons and sleeves, turbochargers and dual wheels for tractors; an automatic header control for combines and an improved rolling coulter assembly for plows. Now, the M & W Little Red Wagon is probably the best known farm wagon, the M & W Perfect Kern'l Dryer, the most advanced grain dryer. M & W is now in the process of introducing its own heavy duty, automatic hydraulic reset plow.



The board of directors is made up of Elmo Meiners, pres.; LaVerne Meiners, vice-pres.; J. C. Ertel III of Indianapolis, secretary - treasurer and J. P. Hawkins, assistant secretary. In addition to the main office and plant at Gibson City, the company also has offices and warehouses at Memphis, Tenn. and Des Moines, Iowa.

Present employment is 230.



GIBSON IRON WORKS

The Gibson Iron Works was incorporated July 12, 1893 for the period of 20 years; for the purpose of manufacturing Iron Novelties, Hot Water Radiators, Castings of Gray Iron; general foundry and machine business.

The capital stock of this corporation was \$50,000; 500 shares at \$100 per share. There was a board of 5 Directors who were elected by the stockholders at the annual meeting for the term of 2 years. They received \$1.00 for each regular meeting attended. President T. R. Wiley, E. H. Harry, Secretary, J. W. Haines, R. A. McClure, J. D. Mellinger. The machine shop was built this year and the first shipment of machinery was made January 1, 1894 and 60 days was given for payment to be made. On October 25, 1895 J. D. Mellinger was elected President, J. W. Haines, Vice Pres., Al Phillips, Treas., E. H. Harry, Secretary, R. A. McClure, Director.

April 9, 1901 there were 24 stockholders and 7 board members. In 1905 the plant was offered for sale for the sum of \$20,000 or rent for \$1200 yearly rent. But no deal was made. By 1912 things were looking up a little and a dividend of \$2.00 per share was declared; in 1918 things were still better; they raised salaries and declared an \$8.00 per share dividend.

In 1920 the Gibson Iron Works was sold to J. T. Reedy and John V. Anderson, Chicago. New officers being J. T. Reedy, President, John V. Anderson, Vice Pres., James Hutchings, Treas. and Secretary. They carried on the same type of business as the original owners. His son Stewart Anderson worked in the foundry for some time and learned the trade. The depression came along and in the early thirties the Gibson Iron Works went out of business.

John V. Anderson then opened a small machine shop of his own and operated it until sometime in 1956 when he was forced to retire because of ill health.



ATTORNEYS

The City of Gibson was late in attracting attorneys in as much as it was not the county seat of Ford County. The first attorney to open a law office in Gibson was C. H. Yoemans who began his practice in July of 1871. Mr. Yoemans was also the first city attorney. He was joined in 1883 by A. L. Phillips. Mr. Yoemans left the practice in 1884.

Mr. Phillips was elected States Attorney April 1, 1892 and served two years. He also served one year in the State Legislature. Mr. Phillips practiced alone until he was joined by Claude M. Swanson in 1916. Mr. Swanson was inducted into service and later when he returned from service opened an office in Paxton. In January of 1913 O. R. Middleton and Frank Shawl, fresh from law school, also opened an office in this city. Frank Shawl later left and O. R. Middleton practiced alone until he joined A. L. Phillips after Mr. Swanson's departure to service. Mr. Phillips retired and O. R. Middleton practiced alone until joined by Sibyl H. Middleton in 1930. The office later became known as Middleton & Middleton and has since been joined by William S. Middleton in 1939 and Margaret R. Middleton in 1961.

In 1883 Samuel P. Rady opened an office and practiced until his death. Sometime in the 1890's L. A. Cranston opened a law office and was active in practice until he moved to Danville in 1907.

July 1, 1933, Lindley, Pacey and Johnson establned an office in Gibson City. The office remained until November 23, 1941, when it became known as Lindley, Pacey & Pacey.

It remained this way until June 29, 1944, at the death of Mr. Lindley. Office then closed completely in Gibson City.

Of the later attorneys Judge Frank Lindley of Lindley, Pacey and Johnson of Paxton, Illinois, opened an office after his retirement from the bench and practiced in Gibson City until his death in 1944.

In early 1945 Charles E. Carnahan opened a law office and had an active practice until his death. In 1946 E. P. Sawyer also opened an office and practiced until his death. The latest office this city has now has been opened by Arthur R. Benz.



Dr. W. D. Hoover and daughter (now Mrs. Sibyl Middleton).



J. H. WHITE'S STORE



Kash-Karry Self Service Store 1919 - 1931



J. B. Palmer Grocery Store in 1910. The site is now Cornie's Shoe Store.



Barkow's General Store in 1912. The store was located on the northwest corner of 5th St. and Sangamon, the present location of Coast to Coast (south half). Pictured left to right are Mrs. Freddie Barkow, Matthew Barkow, Tommy Barr and Lester Torrence.



Spalding Lumber



The Fair



Hunt's Coliseum was moved by Rhodeses in the fall of 1930 to the location of the former Kentland Dairy (just south of IGA).

RHODES HOUSEMOVING SERVICE

About 1890 J. S. Rhodes and family moved to Gibson City from LeRoy, Ill. Soon Mr. Rhodes became engaged in the house moving business. A short time later he took on a partner in the business, Sid Simmons. They had horses, mules and early in their history, had a team of oxen to do the pulling jobs.

In 1904 after J. W. Rhodes came back from the Spanish - American War, he spent 2 years in Kansas City, Mo. moving and raising buildings. He sold out and came back to Gibson City. In 1906, J. W. Rhodes bought out his father and his

partner and started in business for himself.

In 1946, J. W. retired from active business and turned the work over to his two sons, Virgil J. Rhodes and Harold W. Rhodes who are still active in the work.

Both Virgil and Harold have sons who have done this work and grandsons who are still in high school that have helped through the summer at the work of raising and moving buildings.

This makes five generations of the Rhodes family that have been house movers.



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Wrenn's Sunnycastle Farms, Inc.



(Note: Many layers of dust were removed from records to uncover the items below regarding the early history of the Village of Gibson. A special thanks to Mrs. Stewart

(Margaret) Anderson, City Clerk, for the hours she spent doing the research.)

In 1869 the town site was purchased by Civil War veteran Jonathan B. Lott from Jesse B. Whitehead of Chicago. The land was surveyed in February 1870 for a mile square.

Mr. Lott built his home here and Gibson City had its inception. Lott's wife, the former Margaret A. Gibson, whom he married in 1867, was remembered by her husband when the town was named "Gibson". In making application for a post office in that name, the department added the word "City" to the original name because of the confusion with the town of Gilson, Ill.

The village was incorporated in 1872. T. D. Spalding, J. H. Collier, S. J. LeFevre, Bruce McCormick and W. T. Kerr were trustees, with Spalding serving as president. Later, Spalding served as the city's first mayor.

The trustees were sworn in on June 10, 1872 by Bruce McCormick, Justice of the Peace. In the minutes of the meeting, S. J. LeFevre moved that the corporate limits of Gibson would include all of Section 11, Town 23, Range 7, East of the 3rd Principal Meridian, Ford County, Ill.

LeFevre was elected treasurer; Milton D. Worrell, constable, street supervisor and town collector.

At that meeting, A. S. Guthrie was authorized to contract for having Sangamon Ave. graded up for a distance of one-half mile south of Gibson. A committee of two, Collier and McCormick, were appointed to establish rates of licenses and decide what businesses should be licensed.

License fees for a year were established as follows: livery stable, \$20; drayman, \$5; billiard hall, \$20; and butchers, \$10.

A tax of \$1 per head was assessed on all owners of dogs. A new dog would be taxed \$2.

JUNE 1872 - What was then known as Third St. was scheduled for grading 2½ blocks east from what was then Erie St. and two culverts installed. A poll tax of \$2 per day for three days was levied. Compensation for draymen hauling within the corporate limited was set at 25 cents per load.

The street commissioner's salary was fixed at \$2.50 per day worked. Licenses for shows were \$5 and each side show \$3 each for 2 shows each; auctioneer's license was \$10 a year; peddlers \$2 for two weeks or \$3 for one month and \$2 a month thereafter.

The first wooden sidewalks were built in 1872. They were constructed of one inch lumber with three stringers 2 x 6 inch, one foot wide and running lengthwise and were 18 inches off the ground.

Application was made for the first beer license on July 8, 1872. No action was taken by the trustees.

The first sidewalk ordinance was adopted July 23, 1872. Another ordinance adopted the same date prohibited trains blocking railroad crossings for more than 15 minutes at any one time. (note: Later amended to five minutes.)

JULY 29, 1872 - A petition was presented by 32 voters requesting the president and board to call an election for the purpose of voting for or against incorporation under the act of the Legislation approved April 19, 1872. The election was posted for August 19, 1872, to be held at Ring and Collier Hardware Store. Twenty-five votes were cast in the election. All voted for incorporation.

In other action on July 29, 1872, a license and ordinance

was adopted granting drug stores and druggists licenses "to sell liquors for medicinal and sacramental purposes on the prescription of a regarded practicing physician." They were required to keep a register of such prescriptions. Violators would be fined \$25 and imprisoned until such time as fine was paid (not to exceed 6 months for any one violation).

Dogs running loose presented a problem then as they do now 100 years later. A motion was made and adopted that all dogs found running at large within the corporate limits without being muzzled "are hereby declared a nuisance and that any person finding such dogs running at large be authorized to kill them."

Charles H. Yeomans was employed as corporation attorney August 19, 1872. In other action, a bill for digging the first well was presented for \$17 -- but trustees would only allow \$15.

ORDINANCE NO. 1 of the city was for sidewalk construction.

AUGUST 28, 1872 - The amount of \$500 was set for general taxation for village purposes. (Note: By 1878, the tax levy was \$8000.)

IN 1873, the poll tax was raised to \$4 for three days work.

The clerk's salary was \$50 a year if ordinances were published - \$70 if they were written and posted. The street commissioner got \$2.50 per day. His duties included inspecting all chimneys and flues in the village and order such repaired if needed as well as remove all combustible rubbish.

Committees were named for Fire and Water, Streets and Alleys, as well as a Fire Marshall back in those days -- just as we do now.

The problems of sidewalks seemed to come up at almost every meeting. Each person had to apply for a permit to construct a walk by his home or place of business. Each was acted on by the trustees.

IN 1874 the clerk's salary was lowered to \$40 a year. The street commissioner's salary was reduced to \$2 per day. Clerks and judges at elections received \$2. C. H. Yeomans, city attorney, received one-half the fines collected as his pay. That year the city had a street scraper constructed. The appropriation ordinance was \$1300. A tax of \$1200 was levied on the town.

AN ORDINANCE was passed prohibiting firecrackers.

IN 1875 - the poll tax was \$3 for three days work. All people conducting a permanent business were required to pay a license fee fixed by the trustees. An ordinance was passed August 2, 1875, closing business houses on Sundays, with the exception of drug stores. The fine for violation was \$100.

Water was first supplied by use of a wind mill. In September 1875, the shaft was ordered removed from the wind mill and the well in front of Union Hall was put in good order and a pump was purchased.

The problem with railroads in regard to keeping up their

crossings in the village was the topic at many meetings. Even in 1971, the city council has this topic on its agenda many times.

APRIL 18, 1876 - Another liquor ordinance was drawn up for the sale of "malt and vinous liquors" and the fee was fixed at \$1000 per year.

OCTOBER 9, 1876 - J. D. Mellinger's Addition was annexed to the city. There were three liquor licenses in force at that time. These people asked that the fee be reduced, but it was denied.

JANUARY 2, 1877 - A committee was appointed to produce street lamps. On February 12, 1877, the committee on lamps reported to the trustees and were ordered to purchase 10 lamps for the town.

The first board of health was appointed Dec. 23, 1881.

OCTOBER 28, 1889 - A committee was appointed to investigate electric lights for the town. Committee named were Worrell, Rockwood and Ross.

NOVEMBER 11, 1889 - Electric lights were installed with a 2 - mile circuit for \$1500. On the same date bids were taken for printing city reports, etc. E. Lowery bid 3 cents per line or \$12 per year; P. A. Coal of the Enterprise bid 2 cents per line, for treasurer's report 24 cents per 100 words. Coal's bid was accepted.

AUGUST 23, 1894 - Ordinance was passed for construction of water works and bonds issued in the amount of \$7800 - rate was 5 percent, 20 - year maturity, \$1000 each.

APRIL 24, 1894 - Ordinance passed changed name of the town from Village of Gibson to that of a city under the general incorporation act of the State of Illinois in regard to cities and village in force July 1, 1872. The ordinance specified that the government consist of a mayor, six aldermen, a city clerk, a city treasurer and a city attorney. This was passed and printed in Gibson Enterprise May 24, 1894

JULY 30, 1895 - The city was divided into three wards (there are now 4 wards). At that date most old ordinances were cancelled and new ones written. A new seal was purchased and license fees revised.

MAY 29, 1899 - First brick sidewalk ordinance was passed.

An ordinance for concrete sidewalks was passed on May 10, 1904. Streets were re - numbered north and from center of Lake Erie & Western Railroad south from same point.

In 1903 Dix Telephone Co. came to Gibson City with telephone service. In 1904 Gibson Home Telephone Co. replaced them.

JULY 24, 1906 - First fire department under city supervision was organized.

Members of the new fire company named on August 28, 1906 were George Woolley, Ford Curtis, Steve Huffman, (assistant chief), Will Kashner, George Offner (treasurer) Ike McLaughlin (captain Hose Co. No. 1), Jno. Robbins, Al Mix, Chief Morris Emmons, Will Bolton and John Smith. Constitution and by - laws adopted for their regulation at this

meeting.

On September 11, 1906 the following names were submitted and accepted for membership in the volunteer fire department: Lawrence Fitzhenry, N. Mitchell, Ed Phares, Ed Ashley, Henry Rick, Alf Jennings (Capt. Hose Co. No. 2) and Charles Clark (secretary). Later on March 12, 1907, the following names were added to the department: Bryan Emmons, Ross Connors, Charles Ashly, Bart Wright and Claud Simmons.

On April 30, 1907, a motion was passed to construct a tennis court in the city park. It would be located at the southside or southeast corner of the park.

JUNE 11, 1907 - Noble Bros. were granted permission to build a 2 - story addition of galvanized iron to their building on North Sangamon. The elevator still stands at this location.

SEPTEMBER 10, 1907 - George Wood was appointed street commissioner. The State Board of Health requested that the pond in the park be drained. A drainage district was talked about but not enough people signed the petition, therefore, the city had to proceed to do this job.

FIRST WATER METERS - Ordinance passed August 13, 1907, effective Jan. 1, 1908. The meters were provided by consumer according to city specifications. They were also purchased through the city. First water rates were 2 cents per 100 gallons or a minimum bill of \$2 per term of six months. All meters were turned over to the city by the consumers in 1930 as so many were in need of extensive repair.

On and after August 1, 1909, the water rates or water taxes were collected quarterly, falling due the first day of the following months: April, July, October and January. Quarterly rates for water used was set.

J. S. Robbins applied for the first bowling license on December 28, 1909. Eighty - two people signed a petition asking for a bowling alley. The application was denied.

ON MARCH 6, 1911, the following action was taken: "Whereas William Moyer did on the 13th day of February, 1911, donate to the city of Gibson \$14,000 with which to purchase a site for and erect a free public library building for use and benefit of the City of Gibson (such library to be known as the William Moyer Library), the following board of directors for the new library were appointed by Mayor Hi Arrowsmith: S. J. LeFevre, Evan Mattinson, C. E. Lowery, J. Y. Shamel, W. H. Simms, Honorable J. H. Collier, L. E. Rockwood, J. W. McCall and Honorable A. L. Phillips."

JUNE 25, 1912 - Marshall Stephens reported complaints of a dog poisoner being around.

SEPT. 22, 1914 - The pot belly stove gave way to furnace heat in the city hall.

1916 - The Wilkinson building was built.

Lott Boulevard was paved in 1922. Originally named Lott Street, it was renamed in April, 1923.

Mayor and commission type of government was adopted May 7, 1923.

The pavilion in the north park was originally owned by the

Chatauqua Association. They gave it to the city by resolution on September 24, 1929, for the indebtedness of \$250.

Cars once parked in the middle of Sangamon Ave. This was changed to side parking in October 1930

Parking meters (235 of them) were installed in the fall of 1949. During the first few years this revenue supported the police department.

The sewage disposal plant was built in 1953 - 54 at a total cost of \$183,671.32, plus cost of land which was \$8,000.

CITY PARKS

MELLINGER'S PARK (commonly called the north park) was given to the city by J. D. Mellinger in 1905. He was an early settler in Gibson City. Fireplaces were placed in this park first in May, 1924

LeFEVRE PARK, located just north of the United Methodist Church, was created by Ordinance No. 1020 on March 13, 1917.

ARROWSMITH PARK (known as the south park) was given to the city in August 1925 by H. P. Arrowsmith.

LOWRY PARK located on the west side of the city was given to the city by Mrs. Elizabeth Lowry Elkin in the fall of 1967 to be used as a playground for children.

CITY HALL HISTORY

The first city hall was located on the south half of Lot 3, Block 11, Original Town of Gibson (where the vacant First National Bank parking lot is now located). The building was constructed in 1873.

Behind it stood the old frame jail house built in 1874 by Jens Rasmussen. It measured 14 feet by 24 feet and cost \$165.

The city hall property was sold Sept. 26, 1905, by bids. High bidder was J. M. Baily for \$3002.

A new city building was erected on the site of the present building. The contract for the building was awarded to I. S. Shaw. His bid was \$7252. Completion date was 120 days. Bids were opened Oct. 5, 1905. Paul O. Moratz was the architect. The fire department room was to be sealed with yellow pine boards, upper floors to be double, first layer being rough and laid diagonally; copper gutters instead of tin; brick to be Bloomington brick or "any brick just as good."

The building was destroyed by fire Feb. 11, 1937 -- the day of the annual Firemen's Ball. After fire destroyed the building, the City Council met on the first floor of the old Illinois Bell Telephone Office then located on East 8th St.

Bonds were issued in the amount of \$21,000 to finance the cost of a new building. The architect for the present building was Aschauer & Waggoner. Bonds were sold on June 11, 1937, payable over 10 years at 3½ percent interest.

The contract was let in September 1937 for \$21,625. The contractor was J. W. Montgomery of Danville. Plumbing, heating and wiring contract was awarded to Lester Ping for \$3,849. Final payment was made in March 1938, upon completion and approval of the contract.

The bronze plaque which hangs in the hall of the city building was presented to the city by John V. Anderson,

former owner of the Gibson Iron Works and Anderson Welding and Machine Shop located on East 8th St.

The large oil painting of a stag which hangs in the council room was presented to the city shortly after completion of the new building by Frank Hunt, Jr. The painting originally hung in what was known as the Lotus Club in the early days of the city.

During the winter of 1970 and spring of 1971, the old fire station was remodeled into a new council room and an office for the mayor. The former council room will be the new city clerk's office and the police department will be located in the former city clerk's office.

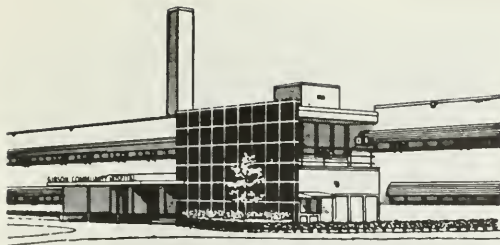
The fire department is now located in the "old Royal building" connected to the city building on the east. The city purchased this building several years ago.



This City Hall was destroyed by fire on Feb. 11, 1937.



FIRST JAILHOUSE



GIBSON COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

The Gibson Community Hospital is a 59 bed general hospital operated in conjunction with the Gibson Community Hospital Annex, a 26 bed nursing home.

The hospital was originally opened in 1952 (after its charter in 1946) as a 50 bed institution. An addition completed in 1963

increased its capacity to the present total of 85 beds.

The Gibson Community Hospital and Annex are licensed by the Illinois State Board of Health and are both accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Hospitals. The hospital is a member of the American Hospital Association, the Illinois Hospital Association, a Blue Cross hospital and is certified for Medicare patients.

One hundred twenty-five employees participate in patient care either directly or indirectly in the hospital or annex. All general hospital facilities are provided such as laboratory, x-ray, surgery, maternity, nursing, acute care, post anesthesia recovery, inhalation therapy, physical therapy, etc. Continuing efforts have been made through the years to add new facilities and upgrade all sections of the hospital and annex.

A total of 12 physicians and dentists representing Gibson City, Bellflower, Colfax, Paxton, Roberts, Saybrook, Sibley, and Champaign are on the active staff of the hospital with another 19 physicians and surgeons from various cities in central Illinois serving on the consulting staff.

The Gibson Community Hospital and Annex is a tribute to the courage, faith and concern for people felt by the citizenry living in the Gibson community.

VILLAGE PRESIDENTS

T. D. Spalding (1872)
J. H. Collier (1873)
S. J. LeFevre (1874)
George Mullendore (1875)
C. C. Grim (1876)
A. Crabbs (1877)
James E. Crammond (1878)
Wm. Cornell Jr. (1879)
A. Crabbs (1880 - 81)
G. D. Spaulding (1882)
G. S. Egglestone (1883)
J. E. Crammond (1884-85)
O. H. Damon (1886)
J. E. Crammond (1887 - 88)
Dr. T. R. Wiley (1889)
T. D. Spalding (1890 - 93)
John H. Holmes (1893 - 94)

On May 22, 1894, an ordinance was passed and approved by the president and board of trustees of the village of Gibson, declaring the City of Gibson duly incorporated, and called for a special election for the election of a mayor, city council, city clerk, city attorney and city treasurer for the ensuing year and for the appointment of judges and clerks of said election.

The question for city organization was submitted to voters at an election held April 17, 1894 "in the manner provided by law, and the majority of votes cast at said election were for city organization under the general law."

The president of the village at that time was J. H. Holmes. Trustees were J. C. Thornton, Timothy Ross, E. H. Harry, W. A. Hoover and Fred Kesting. Judges for the election of Gibson City's first mayor, six aldermen, city clerk, city attorney and city treasurer were John W. Ewing, James Robbins and Jacob W. Preston. Clerks were Henry C. Johnson and Amos Ball.

MAYORS

T. D. Spalding (1894-95)
O. H. Damon (1895-96)
E. H. Harry (1897-98)
J. K. Jones (1899 - 1900)
O. H. Damon (1901 - 02)
Jacob Roth (1903 - 06)
C. W. Knapp (1907 - 08)
H. P. Arrowsmith (1909 - 10)
John T. Swanson (1911 - 14)
William Noble (1915 - 17)
resigned Dec. 1918
E. H. Harry (unexpired term of Wm. Noble) (1918)
G. W. Merritt (1919 - died May 1920)
Dr. Frank Hunt (1920 - 22)
Peter Schertz (1923 - 26)
Dr. Frank Hunt (1927- 28)
F. P. Johnson (1929 - died August 1930; H. C. Krudup mayor pro-tem)
H. C. Krudup (1930 - 39 - Frank Hunt Jr. mayor pro - tem)
Frank Hunt Jr. (Sept. 1939 - May 1944. R. J. Knapp, mayor pro - tem)
Robert J. Knapp (1945 - 49)
Elmer E. Swanstrom (1949 - 53)
Henry Hager (1953 - resigned Feb. 59, W. A. O'Neal, mayor pro tem)
Clifford L. Shaner (May 1959 special election - 61)
David S. Stoker (1961 - 65)
Charles H. Crowley (1965 - 69) Leland Bush, mayor protem from May to July 1969)
Donald E. Craig (July 1969, special election)

MOYER LIBRARY HISTORY

Those of us who do not know intimately the history of Gibson City, perhaps wonder when the idea of having a public library in Gibson first had its inception. There are on file at the library, some of the first certificates issued by the Gibson Library Association dated June 24, 1876. Only one other enterprise in Gibson has longer standing -- the Gibson City Courier.

The data concerning the work of this library association isn't very definite but the best that could be learned from the records is that it was carried on under great difficulties, no permanent quarters being available. The first stock of books were housed in Dr. Water's office, a building in the block now occupied by the present library.

The first Gibson Library Association carried on from 1876 probably until 1890. The association issued a catalogue in 1879 listing some 300 volumes. Another catalogue issued in 1883 listed some 400 volumes. Mr. Lowry says, in the letter from which this material is taken, that it was his privilege to be librarian on Saturday afternoons when he did the most solid reading of his lifetime. From 1890 to 1900, the library was in the care of the local Y.M.C.A. and was housed in an upstairs room over the Kash and Karry Store, that is now the south part of Cornie's shoe store.

About 1905 the library was moved to the Burwell Opera House, now the Masonic Lodge. During these years no regular librarian was in charge. From this time for several years it was housed in different places, notably the Higgin's photograph studio in the McClure Block, this is now where the buildings were burned and torn down and is now an empty parking lot. The old Library Association name still remained.

Early in the winter of 1911 it was disclosed that William Moyer, one of the early settlers, left Gibson \$14,000 to be used

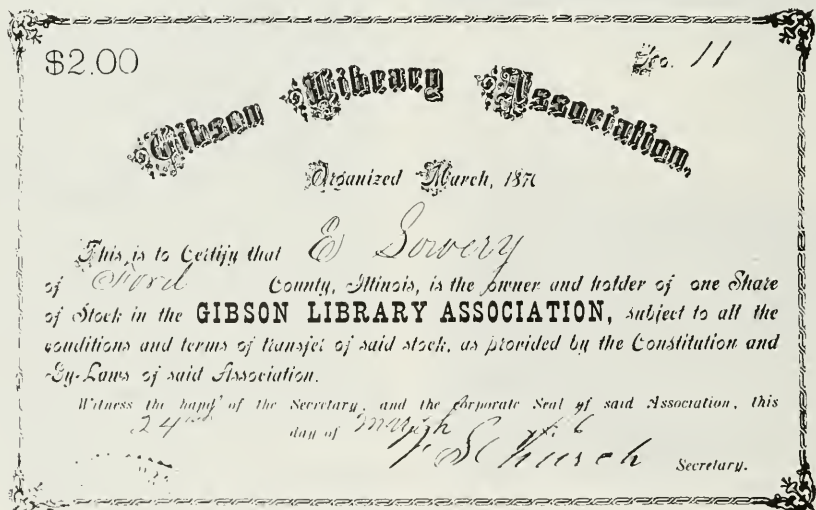
for the benefit of the city. It was decided to build a library for the city and a lot was secured at a cost of \$4,400 from the father of Mrs. Chloe Rady Barrow. The rest of the money was to be put into the building and equipment. When the old library association turned over its books to the Wm. Moyer Library, named after its donor, there were between five and six hundred volumes.

The original Wm. Moyer Library was torn down because it had been condemned by the state and the new library, under the name of Moyer Library was built. It took five years and two bond issues to get sufficient funds to build the present library. During those five years the library was housed in the V.F.W. building just south of the railroad on Lott Boulevard.

In 1962, the library moved into its new building and celebrated with a grand opening. In this centennial year, 1971, Moyer Library has over 14,000 volumes. Gibson City has had library service for over 95 years - from 1876 to 1971. Now even better service is possible because of the library's membership in the Lincoln Trails Library System. This makes possible not only many more books but also films, records and pictures.

The regular librarians since the first library building have been Mrs. Lucy Culter from 1912 to 1949. Mrs. Charlotte McClure assisted and was librarian for a time. She was succeeded by Mrs. Mary Kay Barton Edwards. The present staff at Moyer Library consists of Mrs. James Hartford, librarian, Mrs. Ruth Swanson, Mrs. James Mitchell and Mrs. James Kidd.

The present library board consists of W. Thos. Francis, president; Larry Swartzell, v. president; Mrs. Jon Hunt, secretary; Richard Moody, treasurer; Mrs. E. C. Bucher; Mrs. John Noble; Richard Kemple; Mrs. David Kramer and Dr. T. Q. Swanson.





ORIGINAL MOYER LIBRARY



NEW MOYER LIBRARY OPENED IN 1962



View of city some years ago taken from top of Central Soya bins.



WATER WORKS, GIBSON CITY, ILLINOIS.

OLD WATER WORKS



WATER TOWER



A Christmas season scene years ago. Smaller lighted trees decorated the sidewalks.



Old street scene showing Moyer fountain



MOYER FOUNTAIN



The pavilion in the North Park is the scene of many family gatherings and band concerts in the summertime. The old dirt floor was covered with

blacktop in 1968. The project was sponsored by the Jaycees.

THE PAVILION AT NORTH PARK

The pavilion at the north park was originally owned by a group called the Chautauqua Association. The association gave it to the City by resolution September 24, 1929, for the indebtedness of \$250.

The original resolution read as follows:
To the Honorable Mayor and Aldermen,

City of Gibson, State of Illinois:

At an official meeting of the members of the Gibson City Chautauqua Association, held in the Chautauqua Pavilion in the City of Gibson and State of Illinois, on the evening of Monday, September 23, 1929, a resolution was passed and adopted by a majority of the members and a majority of all outstanding stock, by virtue of which the Chautauqua Pavilion, located on City Park Ground, is tendered to the City of Gibson, to become its exclusive property, to be maintained by the City for the public purposes for which it was erected, and such purposes as in the judgment of the City Council are for the benefit of the community.

This action was taken by the Chautauqua Association to preserve and perpetuate this unique and valuable property for the benefit and enjoyment of the community, and to serve as a gathering place for functions which can be accommodated in no other enclosures in the community, and with the understanding that the only reimbursement asked of

the city will be the payment of the present small indebtedness of the Association, amounting to the sum of about \$250.00.

The tender of this property is made to your honorable body with the hope that it will receive your favorable consideration.

Presented by

J. T. Swanson,
Dr. Geo. A. Wash,
W. S. Lamb,

Committee.

C. E. Lowry,
L. E. Rockwood,
Dr. R. N. Lane,
Resolutions Committee.

C. E. Lowry,
President Chautauqua Ass'n
Bryson Strauss,
Acting Secretary.

DRUMMER TOWNSHIP CEMETERY, 1875

The people of this community may well be proud of the beautiful, well kept cemetery on the knoll at the southwest edge of our city. Jonathan B. Lott, the Founder of Gibson, in 1870 planned to build his house on the site, but decided the location would be the best in the village for a burial ground. He built his house on what was to be named Sangamon Avenue.

In 1874 he deeded 10 acres of land on the "hill" to Drummer Township for a Burying Ground with the provision that an association be formed and trustees elected to supervise the management of the cemetery and a tax be levied to maintain it. This plan has been followed since that time.

The original cemetery was laid out with a circular drive around the hill and the "Soldier's Circle" given the place of honor at the top of the hill. In the center of the Circle Lott Post, No. 70, Grand Army of the Republic, placed a large cannon and a parrot gun with a number of shells which they received from the United States government Fortress Monroe. A flagpole was erected beside the cannon. This was dedicated to the soldiers at a ceremony on Memorial Day May 30, 1898. A circle of Civil War veterans graves surrounds the cannon.

The first burial in the cemetery was that of Mrs. Mary Bowker who died at her farm home south of town on January 8, 1876.

The original plot of ground has been enlarged several times and now consists of approximately 40 acres, extending from the pine trees on the north to Routes 54-47 on the south and to Route 47 on the west. Several new drives have been constructed and plantings of evergreens and shrubbery added. Many of the old trees were destroyed in the tornado of a few years ago.

The old cemetery record books show only the name of the purchaser of the lot, hence graves of the early settlers are

often hard to locate if there is no marker. Better records are now kept.

The first burying ground for this area was on the Andrew Jordan farm. In the 1880's the "marked" graves from there were moved to the new town cemetery. Where no relatives could be contacted, a section in the cemetery was set aside for those graves. Some of the markers were of wood and long since unreadable.

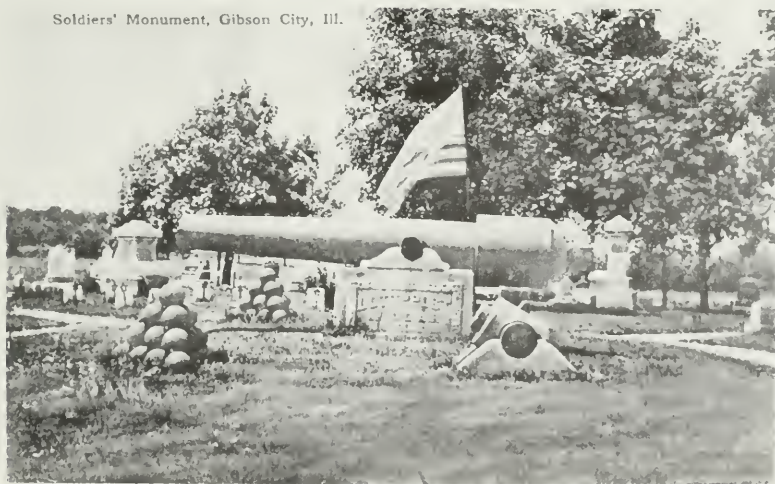
During the summer of 1962, the members of the Governor Thomas Ford Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution conducted a complete survey of every cemetery in Ford County and recorded the readable inscriptions on the markers and tombstones in each one. There were over 3700 of these in Drummer Township Cemetery at that time. Twenty five or so were unreadable.

Six books were printed with these listings. There is one in Moyer Library in Gibson City with the records of the local cemetery also of Mt. Hope Cemetery in Sibley, Waggoner, Elliott, Wallace, Pontoppidan, Meharry, Farmersville, Ten Mile Grove, Pleasant Grove and Mt. Olivet Cemeteries.

There are 60 marked Civil War Veterans graves, five Spanish American War ones, and about 70 World War I Veteran's graves. Not all the veteran's graves may have been marked.

Until recent years flags and flowers were placed on veteran's graves for Memorial Day. There has always been Memorial Day services conducted by Veterans organizations starting almost a century ago when the grand army of Republic men returned from the Civil War honored their soldier dead. This has been continued through the years by the men who have come home from the Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, the Korean Conflict and Vietnam War. The American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars are carrying on with this time honored tradition.

Soldiers' Monument, Gibson City, Ill.



Soldier's Monument



Volunteer firemen of 1883



Many disastrous fires challenged the early settlers in the village. One of the aftermaths of such a tragedy is shown above. But through the determination of these pioneers, the businesses were always rebuilt, better than before.



Gibson City Fire Department float in Corn Carnival parade.



Members of the Gibson City Band as they appeared the day before Decoration Day, May, 1910. Front row, seated from left: Charles Lowery, Bill Ricks, Clyde Smith (leader), John Christensen and Raymond Green; 2nd row, from left: Hugh Bell, (?) Swartsley, Earl Coal, Jule Paxton, Jim Mitchell, Edward Augspurger (?) Paxton and unidentified. Third row, from left: (?) Bland, Ira Munsen, Mike Huffman and Ralph Huffman.



Country lane near Gibson City, Ill.



H I S T O R Y

A SHORT HISTORY OF GIBSON CITY AND VICINITY

Of the 102 counties in Illinois, Ford County was the last to be organized. It has an odd shape because it was founded from land taken from Vermillion and other surrounding counties. It was named in honor of the eighth governor of Illinois, Thomas Ford and was created a county by act of the legislature on February 17, 1869.

The first settlers in Ford County located at Trinkle's Grove near Paxton in 1835 before the county was organized. There are twelve townships in Ford County -- Patton, Drummer, Rogers, Brenton, Button, Dix, Wall, Pella, Mona, Lyman, Sullivan, and Peach Orchard. Drummer Township was second organized -- in 1858, and is said to have taken its name from the little grove called Drummer Grove which lies about a mile northwest of the present Gibson City. The grove is said to have been named for Thomas Cheney's hunting dog, Drummer; so called because he was good at "drumming up wild game."

The first settler in the Gibson City vicinity was Andrew Jordan who came here in 1851. In 1855, a Dr. Davis settled at Drummer Grove where he pursued farming and also practiced his profession. Thomas Stephens settled on land in the southern part of Drummer Township in the early 1850's and engaged in extensive livestock raising during the first year, later in raising flax and corn.

A little later came Sam LeFevre, J. H. Dungan and Leonard Pierpont, who settled near what was to become the village of Gibson.

In a short time the Canterbury, McClure, McKeever and Weakman families came. Settlers had to drive to Paxton or to Chatsworth to market their produce, get their mail, and buy their supplies.

The diary of an early Ford County settler describes Illinois in the 1850's. "It was not a barren waste. It was a bleak, cold waste in the winter time. The snow went the way the wind took it as far as it wanted to go and the tumble weeds also; but in the summer time it was all grass and flowers; the tall grass, when the wind blew, was like waves of the sea, beautiful to behold. You could see as far as the strength of the eye would permit. If you knew where you wanted to go, you had nothing to do but start out and go. There were no roads or hedges as there are now, but look out for the ponds of water, you would be into one before you knew it. The grass would be higher than your heads and it would be lots more trouble getting out of it than in it. The country was mostly given over to grazing. Cattle were fattened on grass and driven to Chicago or to eastern points for market. Settlers had a hard time to keep the deer and cattle from their little corn patches."

Jonathan B. Lott, Civil War veteran, in 1869, purchased the town site of Gibson City from Jesse B. Whitehead of Chicago, and in February, 1870, the land was surveyed for a mile square. Lott built his home here, and Gibson City had its inception. Mr. Lott named the village Gibson in honor of his wife, Margaret Gibson. Later the "City" was added to distinguish it from Gilson, Illinois. With the help of influential friends, he succeeded in having the surveys of three railways changed to come through his town, a great task for any one man at any time.

The first commercial business done in the city was by William Moyer, who opened a grain office in December, 1870. Wilson Brothers opened a general store in June, 1871. In the same month came H. J. Collier. T. D. Spalding opened a lumber yard near the crossing of the railroads, M. T. Burwell established the first bank in 1872, the same year the first paper *The Enterprise* was published in Gibson City.

The village was incorporated in 1872, with T. D. Spalding,

J. H. Collier, S. J. LeFevre, Bruce McCormick and W. T. Kerr as trustees, with Spalding serving as the first mayor.

The first wedding was that of Miss Hattie Gibson, a sister of Mrs. Lott, to Bruce McCormick. The first girl born in Gibson was Maude Lott, a niece of J. B. Lott. Harry Spalding, son of T. D. Spalding, was the first boy. Methodist built the first church in town and were soon followed by the Cumberland Presbyterians, United Brethren and Catholics.

In January, 1883, Gibson City had a destructive fire which burned most of the west side of the street, but in six months time brick structures had replaced the wooden ones. The most pretentious building was the Opera House owned by M. T. Burwell. It is now the Masonic Lodge Hall, and in those early days was said to be the finest opera house in the state outside of Chicago. It boasted a stage, scenery, drop curtains, and was lighted by gas.

The water works were built in 1895 at a cost of \$30,000. It was a gala day for Gibson when the three large fountains donated to the town were unveiled and the water turned on. The large fountain at Sangamon and Ninth Streets was given by William Moyer; the one in front of the Post office by Mattinson, Wilson and Company; and the fountain at the library corner was the gift of O. H. Damon. October 8, 1895 was declared a holiday; the schools were closed and the water was turned on and played against the side of a building to show the people how high it would go. There was a parade and speeches. Then everybody went to a vacant lot where a huge bonfire had been kindled. The firemen came with their hose, turned on the water and put out the fire.

MARY GRIM'S DESCRIPTION OF EARLY DAYS

When building in the village began the slough grass, a particularly tough, strong grass grew several feet high; often it would grow as high as a horse. Weeds flourished in the swampy ground. For many years there was trouble with water and mud and in the western part of the village it was necessary in flood times to rescue people with horses.

There were no churches, no schoolhouses, no colleges to speak of, for miles from the settlement. There were only a half dozen or more families on all the surrounding prairie. Such was the landscape, such the conditions that invited these early settlers.

Game was plentiful, such as deer, wild hogs, wild turkeys, geese, prairie chickens and wild ducks, which provided meat for the families for quite a period ahead.

And even under these primitive conditions, the settlement thrived and others began to come. And this, when spring opened up in full blast, these settlers were more than pleased with the prospects before them.

Of course, there were plenty of discouragements too, as the age was bad, rattlesnakes plentiful, flies simply fierce, especially which was known as the "green heads," that set the horse frantic, yet, with all this these settlers persevered, always looking on the bright side.

The first person buried in the new cemetery was Mrs. Mary S. Bowker. She died Jan. 8, 1876 and was buried on the beautiful knoll southwest of the village where wild deer had roamed only a few years before.

The first trees were planted in Gibson City in May 1879

These were planted by a J. W. Moore, 500 trees of the following varieties

200 Box Elders	12' to 15' high
100 Ash	8' to 10' high
100 Elm	8' to 10' high
30 Linden	8' to 10' high
20 European Mountain Ash	8' to 10' high

50 Evergreens, assorted 6' to 8' high
 50 Ornamental trees and shrubs such as weeping ash, willow, poplar.

The sum paid was \$150.00, payable as follows when trees are planted and in good condition \$65.00; when the said 500 trees are found to be growing and in healthy condition \$40.00; when said trees leaf out in the spring of 1880 and are found to be growing and in good condition the balance of \$45.00.



A line of buggies filled with mourners were included in the funeral procession for Dr. F.O. Culter. The Knights of Templers of Paxton, wearing plumed hats, marched in the procession.

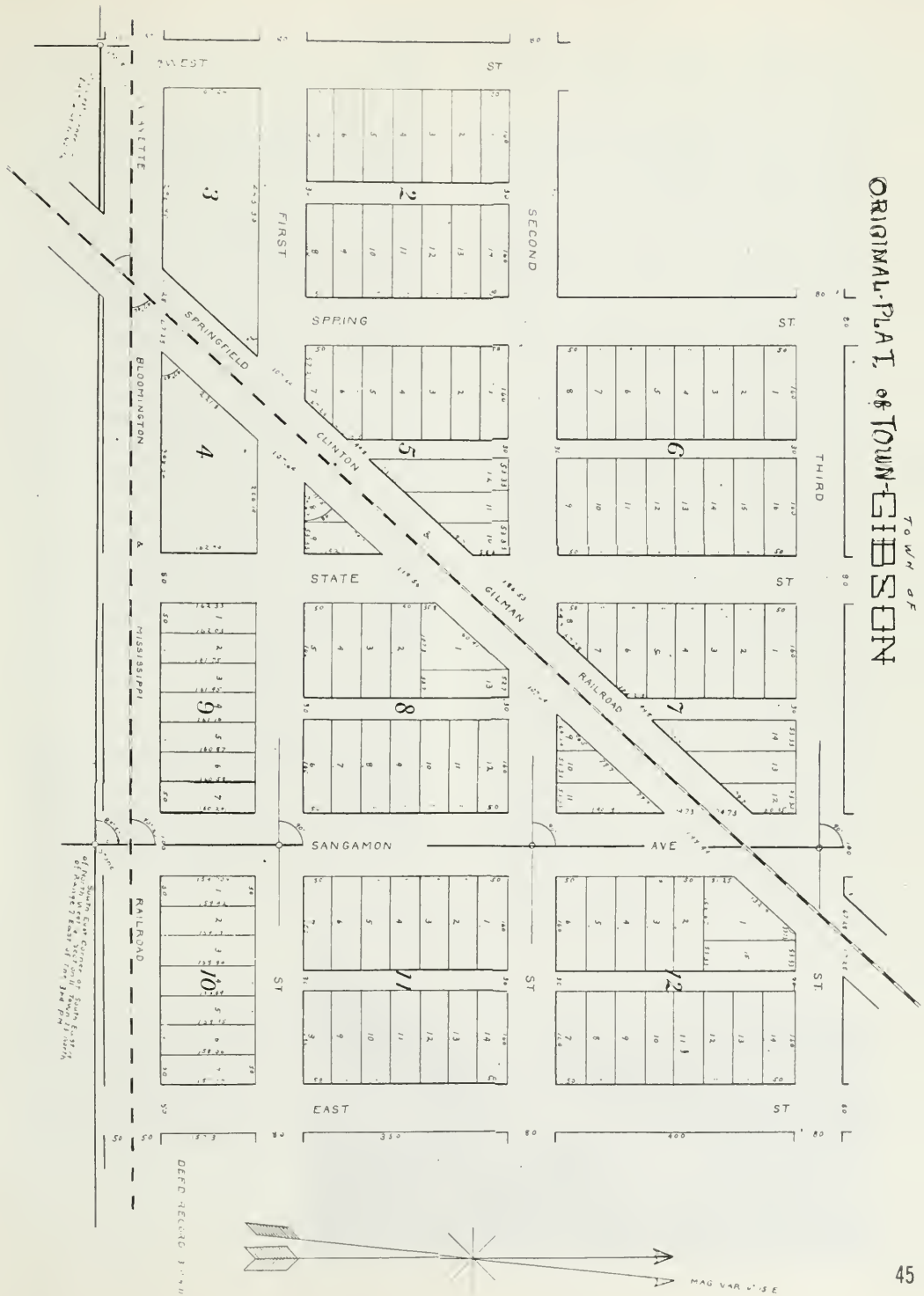


A team of coal-black horses was used to pull the fire engine in the early days of the Gibson City Volunteer Fire Department. In the background is the old city hall which was destroyed by fire February 11, 1937. It was built in 1906. The picture was furnished by long - time volunteer fireman, Frank Cooper. He thought the picture was taken sometime in the 1920's.



One of the city's most impressive funeral processions took place in 1908 upon the death of Dr. F.O. Culter. W.S. Lamb can be seen on the hearse at left. Members of the Masonic Lodge walked behind the hearse.

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Jonathan B. Lott, Civil War veteran, in 1869, purchased the town site of Gibson City from Jesse B. Whitehead of Chicago, and in February, 1870, the land was surveyed for a mile square. Lott built his home here, and Gibson City had its inception.

Because the original town was platted and laid out by Lott, it was named after his widow, Margaret A. Gibson, whom he married in 1867. In making application for a post office of the same name, that department added the word "city" to the original name because of the similarity with Gibson, Ill.

The first store was operated by Wilson Brothers, but soon such men as J. H. Ring, J. H. Collier, and T. D. Spalding joined in the ranks of business men. However, the first commercial business done in town was a grain elevator owned by William Moyer, one of the city's first inhabitants. He started his business in 1870 and soon reached the distinction of being the wealthiest man in town.

C. H. Yeomans was the city's first lawyer; Dr. Anderson, the first physician; J. E. Cruzen the first post master; and M. T. Burwell the first banker. The first paper published in Gibson City was the Enterprise, by N. E. Stevens, in 1872, and after going through several hands, the paper finally came to the Lowry family. Methodists built the first church in town and were followed by the Cumberland Presbyterians, United Brethren and Catholics. The village was incorporated in 1872, with T. D. Spalding, J. H. Collier, S. J. LeFevre, Bruce McCormick, and W. T. Kerr as trustees. A little later Spalding served as the city's first mayor. A few years later, in 1874, there was erected the finest school building in the county with a capacity of 300 students. Another school building with a capacity of 100 was erected eight years later. Both of these buildings were destroyed by fire in 1912 and the present grade school and the Drummer Township High School were erected the same year.

On January 29, 1883, the town was visited by a fire which swept away in the course of a few hours about \$50,000 worth of property. It was here the enterprising spirit of the citizens showed itself, for in less than a month after the fire workmen were busy rebuilding, and soon had erected 12 new brick stores and other improvements at a cost of nearly \$80,000. It was at this time that M. T. Burwell's opera hall was erected which was made famous at that time because the entire building — hall, stage and footlights — was lighted by gas.

The city's waterworks was dedicated in 1895, the city's 25th anniversary, and the first pump had a capacity of 1,500,000 gallons every 24 hours.

The first railroad through Gibson City was the Gilman, Clinton and Springfield, now operated by the Illinois Central which was built in 1871, and was followed the same year by the Lafayette, Bloomington & Mississippi (now Norfolk &

Western - Peoria branch. No regular trains were run until the fall of 1872. The Chicago and Paducah, now the Norfolk & Western - Decatur branch, was built through Gibson City in 1874.

It was in this year that the Swedish delegation of settlers began to arrive in Gibson City. An agreement was made with the Illinois Central Railroad that these new arrivals should settle on the land that the railroad company had for sale in consideration of which the company would give the Swedish Augustana College at Paxton a commission of one dollar per acre on every acre sold to the Swedish settlers.

The first town meeting was held in Guthrie hall, then in Union hall, moved after that to Burwell's opera house, and finally, in 1906, the city hall was built. Just a few years after the erection of the city hall, the William Moyer library was erected. The building was begun in 1911 and completed in 1912 and was made possible by a donation of \$14,000 by William Moyer.

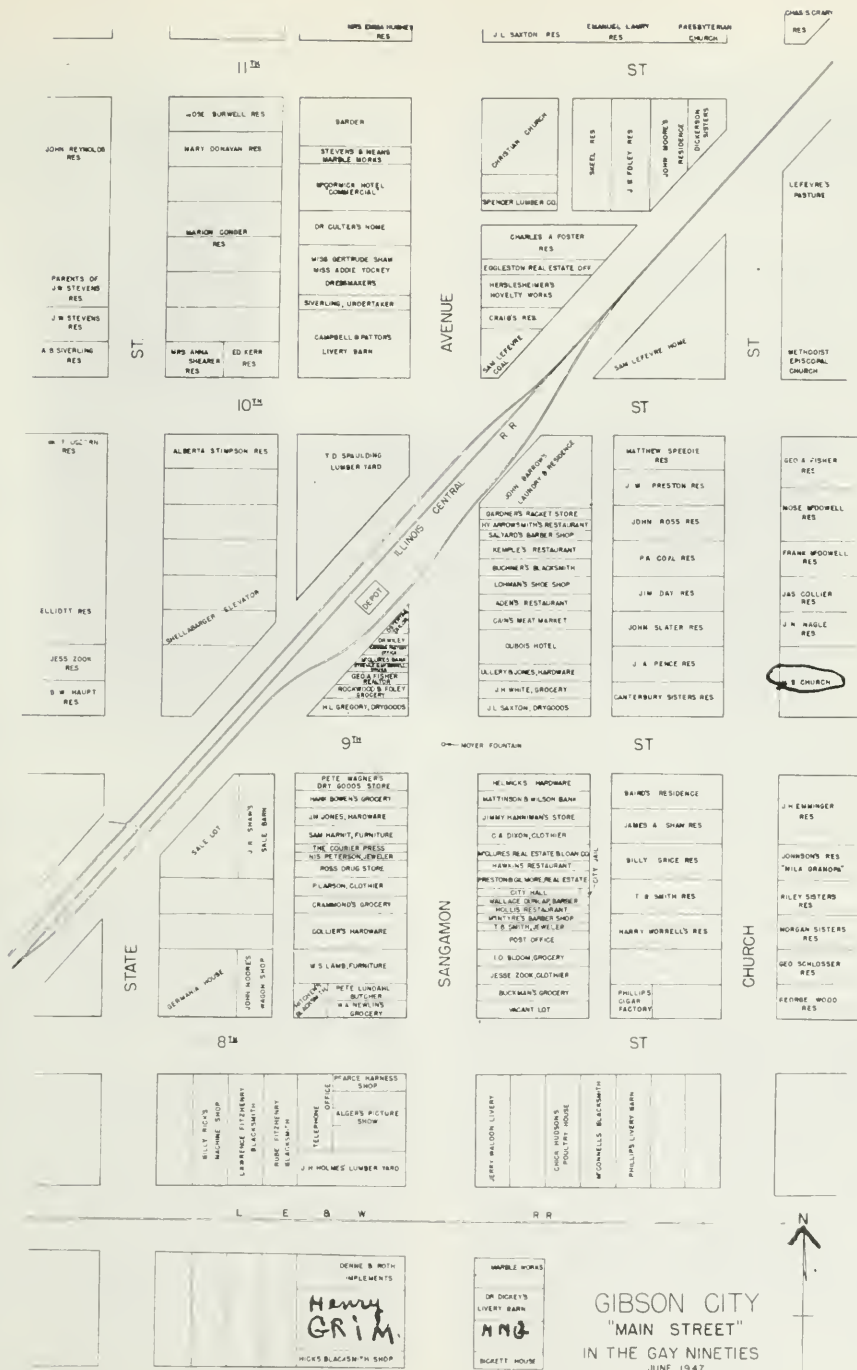
Bruce McCormick, the first happy bridegroom of Gibson City, married Miss Hattie Gibson in 1872. The first child born here was Maude Lott, daughter of J. R. and Ollie, born in 1873. Fred Spalding, the first boy born in Gibson, was later killed in an explosion at the canning factory. The first school in town was taught by Miss Caroline Williams. Mr. C. H. Yeomans was the first lawyer; Dr. Anderson was the first physician; J. E. Cruzen was the first postmaster; M. T. Burwell was the first banker; and J. H. Collier and Austin Crabbs were among the first prominent business men.

Corn and oats in the early days of Gibson sold for 15 cents per bushel, with eggs at 3 cents per dozen. The first store was run by Wilson Bros. Their stock was small and settlers rode on horseback or walked to Paxton and Saybrook for supplies. The first paper published in Gibson was the Gibson Enterprise, published by N. E. Stevens in the spring of 1872. In the fall of 1873 the paper was purchased by Walter Hoge who changed the name to the Gibson Courier. In 1875 Mr. E. Lowry became the owner and editor, selling in 1884 to M. F. Cunningham and John C. Malloy. In 1897 he repurchased it and it was later published by his sons. The paper is now published by Kramer Publishing Co.

In 1885 the first iron foundry was started by E. H. Harry. In the same year a group of men started a canning factory here. A tile factory began operation by Andrew Jordan on his farm just southeast of town. In 1890 a novelty factory was started by Mr. Spalding and Mr. Eggleston. In 1893 a cigar factory was started by Mr. O. J. Phillips. In 1900 Mr. George Wood started a washing machine factory which later became a broom factory. In 1901 a shoe factory was located here. (From City Directory, published by City of Gibson and sponsored by Gibson Chamber of Commerce in late 1940's.)



Gibson City, Ill. in 1885. The village was founded by Jonathan B. Lott in 1870 and was named for his wife, Margaret Gibson. McCabe Meat Market shown at right and old town pump and horse trough. Rev. D. O. Giffin and family, a U. B. minister is shown in the spring wagon at the left. Notice the board awnings and high board side walks.



THE TRUE STORY HOW DRUMMER GROVE WAS NAMED

John Myers, now a resident of Kentucky, tells that in 1836, he in company with his brother, Ephriam Myers, came from Kentucky to explore this part of Illinois.

They traveled on foot by way of Rantoul with the intention of reaching the settlement of Cheney's Grove (now Saybrook).

In the course of their wanderings, they joined Tom Cheney, who was riding a horse and was accompanied by his dog, which he called Drummer because he was good at 'drumming up wild game'.

When they reached what is now Drummer Grove, they discovered traces of wild hogs at the north end of the grove. They fired into the bunch and succeeded in killing two of them. Afterward a deer was seen across the prairie. Cheney left his horse and the dog in charge of John and started out on foot to track down the deer. When he was almost close enough to shoot it, the dog became restless, broke loose, and seeing the deer, immediately gave chase, frightening the deer so that it escaped before the hunter could fire a shot.

When Tom Cheney came back to the Myers' men, he said that he would like to shoot that dog for playing such a trick, and he did just that, right then and there!

Ephriam immediately suggested that they name the grove Drummer Grove, in honor of the dog, and so it has been from that day - this, 135 years ago.

Drummer Grove was to the youth of the village what the Lake of the Woods is to the young people of our town today, a place to go for outings, a place to spend a few hours away from the streets of the town, the school room, and the routine of daily life. The older folk of those early days enjoyed a trip to the grove also. It meant a new hours in the shade of trees, missing in the treeless village, and the sound of running water, which many had enjoyed in their former homes.

The name Drummer was honored in other ways: Drummer Township, Drummer Township Cemetery, Drummer Township high school for a time and even the football team was called the Hounds. Many of the trees have fallen, the spring has been clogged and the grove has been closed to the public because of vandalism but the memory of the good times in Drummer Grove in the years gone by lingers on.

DRUMMER GROVE FARM AND OUR PIONEER ANCESTORS IN REFLECTION

By Helen Foster Kelley

My grandfather John N. Vaughn, a Civil War veteran and member of Lott Post 70 G.A.R., Ford Co., came to Gibson in 1869. He was the father of 11 children. In 1875 he established the first implement business in Gibson, on the site now occupied by the Corn Belt Hatchery. He installed the first wind mills, binders, threshing machines and steam engines to be used in this territory. A few years later he added the selling of real estate to his endeavors. The family lived in and operated a hotel then located just north of the present Fashion Shop. My mother, Ella Vaughn Foster, loved to recall the Republican political rallies of that day in which they all took part.

In very early days, just a mile northwest of Gibson, there was a lovely grove of virgin timber on the banks of a meandering stream, which spread out over a gravel deposit, making a very good ford for those who wished to cross. Close to this grove and on the banks of this stream were several delightful bubbling springs of pure water from which anyone might drink with safety. It was here Tom Cheney came with his dog Drummer to hunt. A deer was spotted, the dog frightened it away and Cheney, so displeased with the dog's behavior, shot and buried him there. Since that time they have been called Drummer Grove and Drummer Creek. It



has been said that Cheney, prodded by remorse, brought an oak from Cheney's Grove and planted it to mark the dog's grave. We know that only one oak tree ever grew there. It has been gone for several years. Many of the walnut, having passed their prime, were used by the government during World War II for gun stalks.

It was in 1854 that Joshua E. Davis, a doctor and owner of this property, came to Drummer Grove to live in a small house with out - buildings. He hired a tutor for his children and invited those in the neighborhood to come. His home soon became crowded, and he moved his family to a house he built on the site we now occupy, which burned in 1913.

When the county was laid out in 1858 and roads began to develop, land was set aside for a school on the Mellenger farm south of us, and the Drummer Grove building was moved. Joshua E. Davis moved from the farm in 1875. His son Frank came in the early 1930's to visit the scenes of his childhood.

My great - grandfather, John Foster, traveled through this part of the country buying grain for his elevator in Chicago. In the year 1869 he started negotiations to buy 700 acres. Drummer Grove Farm, from Mr. Davis. In 1874 the deal was completed and a release granted.

My great - grandfather then began to improve the farm by changing the channel of the creek, which at that time came very near the living quarters. He planted a large orchard of fruit trees bordered on the south by seven acres of pine. Hundreds of night herons made their home there for years. He also planted 5000 forest trees in four different groves, surrounding one with beautiful European larch. The herbs penny - royal and anise - root grew there abundantly. He planted many wild flowers in Drummer: Jack - in - the - pulpit, Dutchman's breeches, dog toothed violets, Wake robins and many more, along with flowering shrubs. The wild crab filled the air with fragrance for half a mile in spring. The blue birds and yellow canaries came in droves. They loved to nest there. There were pussy willows to charm the bees in spring and one's choice of mint for a cup of tea. He built a fine set of buildings with the crib up on stones to keep the rats out and brick house piped with spring water to cool the milk. He installed many miles of tile, open ditches, and board fencing around the farm and groves to protect them from grazing.

We have great - grandfather's ledger in which he kept detailed accounts of his business dating back to 1817. I can remember the sties he used to cross the fences and the homemade sun dials conveniently placed. Before he died in 1898 he deeded my father, John Stanhope Foster, 218 acres with instructions to "sink or swim". Dad also received 120 acres when his mother died, but he did learn to swim, as he soon bought the remaining family interest in the 700 as well

as other adjoining acreage.

In the years that have passed, the public has taken advantage of their welcome to go and come as they pleased at Drummer Grove and the old swimming hole. There was a ball diamond there at one time. However, besides the ravages of nature, the public also proved quite destructive by

leaving fires, digging up the flowers and trees, filling the springs with rocks and breaking the tile, building dams in the creek, shooting at the livestock and killing the birds and squirrels. So it has become necessary to restrict access, even though the grove has long since lost its bloom.



SAGA OF DRUMMER GROVE

Written by J. P. Lowry
(former editor of the Gibson City Courier)

Drummer Grove! Magic name! Paradise of boys for sixty years. This is the forest primeval, sans murmuring pines and hemlock, but verdant with oak, walnut, hickory, haw, wild crab apple and slippery "ellum". When they staked out the village of Gibson in the prairie bottoms at the beginning of the seventies, Drummer Grove was the nearest approach of the primeval forest, and it was a mile and a half away. The urchins of the seventies, wandering afield, found it and whooped for joy.

The boys of the eighties, and nineties and every succeeding decade have found in it the land of romance, the land of Robin Hood and Tom Sawyer and of Injun Joe. They have bivouacked there. They have called it their rendezvous, which they pronounced renddez - vovs and not rondavoo. They have drunk from the icy spring of living water which has bubbled at the edge of Drummer creek for ages. They have buried their treasures in its soil.

Here Mother Earth has taken these boys to her bosom and satisfied the restless yearnings of their souls. The gaunt, ancient trees have thrilled at the dark secrets whispered in their grateful shade. Sunfish and catfish and silversides have nibbled the angle worms from their hooks, and startled crayfish have skeedaddled in the brook before their wading feet.

The big trees are still there, some of them at least, but the dense mysterious undergrowth of the mystic past is gone.

and one charming bend of Bendermeer's stream has yielded to the ruthless dredger. The place is still eloquent in its natural appeal, an oasis in the surrounding fields of corn. A charm from the skies seems to hallow it there, a little bit of heaven, an island of dreams.

The other day Drummer Grove was rediscovered, this time by a descendant of one of the tribes of the Red Man. His eyes saw things which the boys of yesterday could not see. He knew the ancient, imperishable signs left behind by a race long gone. Accompanied by Gibson men who had been Drummer boys, he traced for them a Kickapoo Indian trail along the banks of the little stream. He uncovered sites of former teepees, and dug up close to the surface chunks of flint and firestone. Here was an Indian habitation of perhaps 25 to 30 teepees, he said, and hundreds of years before the Kickapoo another unknown race had been on the banks of this stream and left behind them "footprints on the sand of time."

Perhaps this is the secret of the wild rapture which has filled the heart of boyhood in the quiet precincts of Drummer Grove. Maybe Drummer Grove is indeed the happy hunting ground, and maybe the spirits of these great untutored but nature-wise aborigines wander in these shades and speak the language of the spirit to wide-eyed little boys, leaving a benediction and an impression deeper than all of the prattle of civilization and book learning. Shades of ancient Drummer, we salute thee!

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GIBSON CITY LIONS CLUB

The Gibson City Lions Club was organized on April 20th, 1922 with twenty - six members. This membership had increased to thirty - five by the time the club had its charter night on June 29, 1922. Lionism was then four years old and there were some 500 clubs scattered over twenty - seven states of the Union, compared with today's 16,558 clubs in 118 countries and geographical areas. At that time Gibson City was the smallest city ever to hold a charter and was known as the baby Lion Club of America.

The following year, in 1923, Gibson City Lions Club attended the state convention with the Gibson City band and at the banquet was presented a beautiful silver loving cup, appropriately inscribed, for having the largest percentage of its membership present at the convention. Gibson City's Hy Arrowsmith was a friendly and familiar figure at all the meetings and the "Baby Lions Club of the United States" was in the spotlight throughout the convention.

In 1924 the convention was in Elgin and again a good representation of our club attended with the Gibson City band. Five hundred carnations, three hundred roses and a thousand sweet peas, all Gibson City grown, flooded the convention. Every Lion received a carnation, every Lion's lady a rose. The registration lobby of the big Y.M.C.A. building was decorated by cartoons and catchy mottos calling attention to Gibson City as the place for the next convention. It was Hy Arrowsmith's third convention and his name had become a household word. One cartoon claimed that you could go a hundred miles on one boulevard in Gibson City and showed Hy riding a tricycle around the median strip of the new Lott Boulevard. Another, with Hy standing by a house, with people sleeping on the roof and half way out the windows, showed what accommodations they could expect.

There was keen competition for the convention honors for 1925 but so potent was Gibson City that Cook County asked the privilege of making the nominating speech and a Chicago man seconded the nomination. As the roll of Illinois clubs was called, the vote of club after club of Chicago and Cook County went for Gibson City, and as the enthusiasm grew, downstate fell into line. Gibson City won on the first ballot and immediately the Gibson City band, stationed in the balcony, struck up "Hail, Hail, the Gang's All Here," followed by "There'll Be A Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight." Enthusiastic Lions grabbed Hy Arrowsmith and carried him around the hall on their shoulders.

The State Lions Convention was held in Gibson City on May 18, 1925. In point of attendance it exceeded every record of any state convention prior to that date. The mile long parade which followed the morning session surpassed any Lion parade ever seen in this state up to that time. There were seven bands plus two or three comic bands. Business sessions

took place in the Edna Theater and the 6:30 banquet was held in the park pavilion. This large steel and glass structure had been floored for the occasion, and every available foot of space was occupied by the tables. Four different churches served the dinner from their individual tent which had been erected around the pavilion. It was a success in which the entire community had a part. Homes, churches, lodges, schools, and public buildings were thrown open to the honored guests of the city, and the citizens vied with each other in making the occasion a memorable one. The Cook County delegation, representing about 25 clubs, chartered a solid Pullman train for the convention, including a buffet car. It was set off on the siding of the Illinois Central tracks, where it served as a hotel for the Chicago guests for the two nights. A special train also came from Springfield.

For 49 years, through depressions, booms, and wars the members of the Gibson City Lions Club have met every Tuesday, except for the months of July and August, to eat, laugh, sing and enjoy themselves. But underneath it all is a serious purpose. \$5301.14 has been given by the club for the building of the Gibson Community Hospital and its new addition. The club donates and lends its aid to the Community Chest drive and money is given to the student loan fund each year. Donations are made to the Hadley School for the Blind and Leader Dog School. Students are sent to summer music camps and Boy's State. The children of the community are given a party every Halloween and on Easter. An athletic banquet is co - sponsored each spring honoring athletes of Gibson City High School. The youth baseball program is underwritten by the club. The club supervises the activities of the homecoming football games and prizes are given for the best floats in the homecoming parade.

A gala 40th birthday celebration was held in 1962 in the high school gym. The event attracted some 600 Lions and their wives from all over the state.

During the year 1966 - 67 Lion Wes Calhoun was elected Governor of District 1B.

In the spring of 1967 the District 1B Convention was held at the High School in Gibson City.

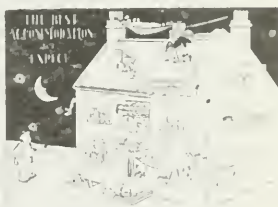
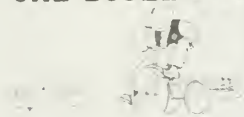
Gibson City, having been the second oldest club in District 1B, became the oldest club in the newly founded District 1K in 1970. The club holds the distinction of being the only club meeting at noon time in District 1K.

Since its organization the club has sponsored 10 Lions Clubs: Hoopston, Onarga, Potomac, Forrest, Milford, Rossville, Colfax, Saybrook, Melvin, and Sibley.

All of the original 25 charter members are dead except one. Andrew Tarbox moved to Indiana about 1927 and now lives in Florida.

Our club's 50th anniversary will be held in the fall of 1972. In the 50 years of Lionism in Gibson City much has been accomplished by the Lions, and we are proud of our club as the Lions go marching on.

A HUNDRED MILES ON ONE BOULEVARD



(ORGANIZATIONS continued on page 58)

Gibson City Area Centennial Calendar of Events

June 26 through July 3

"OLD FASHIONED SUNDAY"

Sunday, June 27

Chm. - Mr. & Mrs. Noel Hutchcraft (Ph: 784-5656)

All activities to be held at the North Park unless stated otherwise.

Morning	Heritage observance in all churches
12:00	Community Potluck Picnic
12:30-4:00	Sports Car Rally - East 16th Street
1:30	Chanute Air Force Band Concert
2:30	Presentation of Winning Costumes
	Ice Cream Social
3:00-5:00	Horseshow Pitching Exhibition
	Pony Cart Rides
	Park Activities and Games
7:00	Concert by the Community Childrens Choir
	Old Fashioned Hymn Sing

"YOUTH DAY"

Monday, June 28

Chm. - Mr. & Mrs. James Hazen (Ph: 784-4416)

ALL DAY	Youth Organization's Exhibits and Displays - Tent Uptown
9:00	Children's Parade - 12 years and under. Awards in various categories. Assemble at United Methodist Church.
9:45	Opening Ceremony of Gibson City's Centennial Celebration - Library.
All afternoon and evening activities to be held at the North Park.	
1:00-3:00	Free Swimming - 18 years old and under - Gibson Pool
3:00	Youth Swimming & Diving Competition, Childrens Games & Contests - Awards
8:00	Teen Dance - 13 to 18 years old
	Kitten Ball - North Park Ball Diamond
	For older "youth" 19 to 99 years old.

"PIONEER HOMECOMING"

Tuesday, June 29

Chm. - Mr. & Mrs. Gary Keim (Ph: 784-4117)

ALL DAY	Displays & Exhibits - Tents Uptown
6:00-9:00	Pancake & Sausage Breakfast - (A.M.)
	Legion Hall
8:00-7:00	Antique Flea Market - Uptown
10:00	Memorial Service for Pioneers and Founders - Cemetery
11:00-4:00	Horseshoeing - Place to be announced
1:00	Fruit Pie Baking Contest - Tent Uptown
	Pies must be at the tent by 12:30.
	Judging at 1:00
2:00	Recognition Ceremony & Awards for pioneers and former residents, followed by refreshments and conversation hour. Tent Uptown
All evening activities to be held at the North Park	
5:00-7:00	Ham & Bean Supper
7:30	Old Time Fiddlers Competition
8:30-11:30	Square & Round Dance
	Exhibition by Circle R Square Dance Club

"TOWN & COUNTRY DAY #1"

Wednesday, June 30

Chm. - Mr. & Mrs. Robert Nelson (Ph: 784-4395)

Co-Chm. - Mr. & Mrs. Gary Reitz (Ph: 784-5826)

ALL DAY	Displays & Exhibits - Tent Uptown
	Antique Machinery Display - South Park
8:00-7:00	Antique Flea Market - Uptown

"TOWN & COUNTRY DAY #1 continued"

9:00-5:00	Country Store - Uptown. Various organizations will be selling their homemade items, baked goods, etc.
1:00	Small Garden Tractor Pull - North Park
	Industrial Tours - Cargill, Inc., Central Soya, M & W Gear Co., Electronic Components Corp., and the Airport. Schedules will be posted at City Hall and Centennial Headquarters. Bus service to and from. Everyone must use the tour buses, no individual cars, etc. allowed at these businesses.
7:15	Pre-Spectacle Entertainment
8:15	Premier Performance of "Running Deer to Soaring Planes"

"TOWN & COUNTRY DAY #2"

Thursday, July 1

Chm. - Mr. & Mrs. Robert Nelson (Ph: 784-4395)

Co-Chm. - Mr. & Mrs. Ronald Knapp (Ph: 784-4378)

ALL DAY	Displays & Exhibits - Tent Uptown
	Antique Machinery Display - South Park
8:00-7:00	Antique Flea Market - Uptown
9:00-5:00	Country Store cont. - Uptown
2:00	Car Polo - M & W Gear Co. North lot (Route 9 East)
	Industrial Tours to be continued
5:30-7:30	Roast Beef Supper - North Park
7:15	Pre-Spectacle Entertainment
8:15	Second Performance of "Running Deer to Soaring Planes"

"LADIES DAY"

Friday, July 2

Chm. - Mr. & Mrs. Lloyd Taylor (Ph: 749-2225)

Special Guest for the Day - Betty Fillip of WCIA-TV

ALL DAY	Displays & Exhibits of interest to women - Tent Uptown
8:00-7:00	Antique Flea Market - Uptown
9:00-5:00	Country Store cont. - Uptown
10:00	Bonnet Contest - Awards - Categories to be announced - Tent Uptown
11:00	Bread Making Contest - Awards - Details to be announced - Tent Uptown
2:00	Style Show of 1971 fashions, featuring winners of various costume awards. First Presbyterian Church
7:15	Pre-Spectacle Entertainment
8:15	Third Performance of "Running Deer to Soaring Planes"

"FREEDOM DAY"

Saturday, July 3

10:30	Time Capsule Ceremonies
2:00	THE GIBSON CITY AREA CENTENNIAL PARADE
	Chm. - Mr. Harold Johnson (Ph: 784-5985)
	The parade will assembly at the Gibson City Athletic Field and will disband at the South Park
5:30-7:30	Chicken Bar-B-Que - North Park
7:15	Pre-Spectacle Entertainment
8:15	Final Performance of "Running Deer to Soaring Planes"
	Giant Fireworks Display will follow

The Gibson City Area Centennial Committee proudly presents...

"Running Deer to Soaring Planes"

A John B. Rogers Production

Directed by Fred Illius

Gibson City High School Athletic Field
June 30 - July 3

Pre-show 7:30 P.M.
Show 8:15 P.M.

In the event of inclement weather, or that four episodes of the production have not been completed, rain stubs will be honored at any subsequent scheduled performance.

"Running Deer to Soaring Planes" follows the outline of history of the city, but certain additions and deletions have been made in the interest of total dramatic unity

NARRATORS

Dave McNeeley	Marjorie Clark
William S. Middleton	Jean Stocker
Harold Nelson	Ruby Smith

SCRIPT

Kay Meredith

PROLOGUE — Naming Drummer Grove
Grand Entrance "Happy Birthday" — Meet the cast

EPISODE ONE: "Another Time Another Man"

EPISODE SIX: "Gibson City Grows"

EPISODE TWO: "The Land Beckons"

EPISODE SEVEN: "We Move into our Future"

EPISODE THREE: "The Birth of a Town"

EPISODE EIGHT: "Oh You Kid"

EPISODE FOUR: "Faith on the Prairie"

EPISODE NINE: "Battle Cry"

EPISODE FIVE: "A Time to Learn"

EPISODE TEN: "Our Destination"

Time: 1871 to the Present

Centennial Patrons

McCord Auto Supply, Inc.
Montgomery Ward, Gibson City, Ill.
Speers Shoe Repair
Schulze & Burch Biscuit Co. - Flavor - Kist Cracker & Cookies
Gibson United Service, Inc.
Theodore Q. Swanson, O.D.
Dr. James Hartford
Coast To Coast Stores, Gibson City, Ill.
Gibson Liqueurette - Mel and Juanita Yeats
Oneal's Auto Repair
H. E. Mulvaney & Son - Plbg & Heat.
Houtzel Auto Body Shop
Chief City Tobacco Co.
Prairie Farms Dairy Inc.
Hol'n One Donut Co.
Bethany Mf & Sales Co., Inc., Bethany, Ill.
McMahon Distributors, Ltd., Champaign, Ill.
Ryder Truck Rental
Howard Thomas Gravel Co.
Cornie's Shoe Store
Edson L. Etherton, M.D.
Dr. Mark R. Foutch, Optometrist
Elkin's Tourist Home
State Farm Insurance, George R. Mattox, Agent, Elliott, Ill.
NI Gas Co.
Noble Bros.
Ropp's Greenhouse
Sibley Complete Feed & Grain Service

Jane Burns Dance Studio
The Farmers Grain Company
Dr. Robert D. Rankin, Dentist
Hoover Jewelers
W. D. Kreitzer & Son, Elliott, Ill.
Bill Hanson Chev. Buick, Inc., Paxton, Ill.
O'Neal & Balson TV
Ken Rost Ford Inc.
Ariens Drug Shop
Arthur R. Benz, Attorney
Smith Sand & Gravel
Laurel E. Ping
Bower Automotive Inc
Gambles
Ace Hardware
Calhoun Dairy Inc.
Cender Gas Company
deMola Florists
L. F. Swanson & Son
Kempke Insurance Agency, Inc.
Western Auto Associate Store
The Hessenhaus
Friendly Flower Shop
Middleton & Middleton
Skywork?
Johnson Auto Repair
Duggins Electric

Gibson City Area Centennial Performing Cast — Spectacle

Brown, Connie
Colwell, Thelma
Parker, Wilhelmina
Ehresman, Maria
Schroeder, Peg
Schroeder, Carol
Kerchanfaut, Dorothy
Warsaw, Bonnie
Timm, Mary
Mizell, Larry
May, Edward
Hager, Doug
Hunt, Jon
Hawthorne, K. R.
Helmick, Loel
Pierce, O. W.
Cender, Emery
Hood, Ron
Hartford, Tom
Heideman, Toni
Heideman, Betty
Eddleman, Kristy Ann
Johnson, Kris
Barrow, Debbie
Stolz, Susan
Main, Bettie
Kumler, Joyce
Rhodes, Connie
Sharp, Michelle
Bell, Kay
Arnold, Raylene
Smith, Ruby
Goodrich, Edna
Smith, Robin
Oliverio, Mary Ann
Perkins, Jimmie Joan
Oliverio, Mary Ann
Schlickman, Tena

Smith, Lean
Bedel, Claudia
Blissard, Barbara
May, Don
Bane, Charles
Muters, John
Hall, Tom
Cook, Wayne
Perkins, Wayne
Goff, Doug
Benningfield, John
D'Neal, Lorene
Moore, Margy
Burton, Patty
Reitz, Judy
Kumler, Ethel
Hill, Diane
Anderson, Doris
Troyer, Hazel
Garard, Lucille
Rickey, Alma
Rickey, Connie
Nelson, Elinor
Braatz, Debbie
Nicholas, Melissa
Perkins, Lorrie
Retter, Delora
Johnson, Sharon
Knapp, Marion
Brooks, Geneva
Tompkins, Mary
Jones, Virginia
Johnson, Leona
Roesch, Rick
Brucker, Jim
Schlickman, Dick
Myers, Phil
Sledge, Shorthy

Schlickman, Dick
Kingsley, Mick
Sisk, Lucille
Ehlers, Glenda
Ehlers, Linda
Reynolds, Mae
Loy, Imogene
Nickrent, Marie
Nelson, Virginia
Young, Doris
Nelson, Sue
Goodrich, Percy
Stolz, Peggy
Nelson, Dorie
Kyle, Nancy
Young, Fran
Graff, Patti
Summers, Jim
Summers, Mona
Huston, Howard
Huston, Yvonne
Reiners, George
Reiners, Beulah
Bell, Buzz
Woodard, Marie
Leathers, Evelyn
Swearingen, Mildred
Borchers, Ann
Borchers, Alice
Brandt, Carolyn
Stocker, Scott
Knapp, Kevin
Knapp, Mike
Taylor, Steve
Knapp, Mary
Roesch, Rick
Brucker, Jim
Reynolds, Francis

Knapp, Doug
Stocker, Frank
Stocker, Jean
Taylor, Mary Ann
Hill, Jane
Hill, Bob
Summers, Bruce
Gregerson, David
Heideman, Brian
Huston, Dorothy
Cullip, Pauline
Grider, Gail
Timm, Jackie
Fields, Julie
Long, Bill
Nelson, Donald
Leisure, June
Hazen, Edwin
Hazen, Mabel
Miller, Charles
Miller, Alvina
Story, Ruth
Pruitt, Earl
Pruitt, Marie
Pruitt, Sherrie
Rhodes, Carole
Rhodes, Don
Rhodes, Greg
Rhodes, Jan
Jenson, Don
Jenson, Janet
Gregerson, Richard
Gregerson, Margaret
Gregerson, David
Samet, Bob
Leonard, Evan
Leonard, Stanley
Kingsley, Mick

Samet, Dolly
Cook, Maxine
Cook, Pam
Whitten, Vandel
Bedel, Mary
Bedel, Delmar
Summers, John
Summers, Helen
Brooks, Cindy
Bedel, Claudia
Berger, Paul
Berger, Quida
Hayse, Annimary
Hayse, Ronald
Davis, Cecil
Davis, Lillie
Benson, Martha
Benson, John
Kroon, Cathy
Lund, Julie
Johnson, Ellen
Kumler, Jane
Taylor, Kim
Mariage, Teresa M.
Strebeck, Susie
Nagle, Dave
Summers, Brenda
Crowley, Julie
Smith, Patty
Smith, Robin
Oliverio, Marianne
Horsch, Dorothy
Cender, Sharal
Cender, Charlene
Kelley, Lois
Taylor, Jack
Woodward, Charlie
Barrow, Dick

Hager, Doug
Cross, Herman
Husen, Kim
Jensen, Sandy
Smith, Chris
Herrin, Lorrie
Ferguson, Anne
Thompson, Treva
Morano, Maria
Gesell, Carla
Jenson, Julie
Howard, Laurie
Timm, Lori
Herrin, Kitty
Evans, Lynda
Williams, Susie
Culbertson, Sherry
Osborn, Homer
Osborn, Helen
Smith, Maurita
Smith, Christin
Hill, Carla
Nunamaker, Sharon
Garard, Jerry
Clark, Pat
Clark, Mary
Rhodes, Jan
Jones, Peggy
Orr, Jan
Jackson, Peggy
Lunde, Patty
Smith, Robin
Kyle, Sally
Parker, Dorla
Parker, Joy
Perkins, Jerrie Lynn
Barrow, Tom
Romine, Ronnie

PATRONS TICKETS

Beulah Builta
Mrs. Helen Foster Kelley
Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Schnittker
Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Green
Raymond N. Holm
Charles F. Hamm
Mr. and Mrs. James A. Taylor
Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Brownlee
Charles Builta
Carl Hedlund
Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd R. Johnson & Mark
C. A. T. Johnson
D. E. Craig
Mrs. Harry Baker
Milton Kelly
Emery P. Cender
Jones Motor Sales by Eva B. Jones
Mr. and Mrs. Dike Eddleman
Chester Burton
Mr. and Mrs. W. P. Loy
Lester R. Moody
Darlene Tucker
Mr. and Mrs. Tom Hunt
Laura Hanley
Mrs. F. N. Bryant
Mark Hobart
Larry Fawver
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Reinhart
Mrs. Mae Helmick
Mr. and Mrs. Howard Hutchcraft
Jack Dubois
Mr. and Mrs. Jerry L. Holsten
Vernon Wilson
James F. Thompson
Evelyn M. Thompson
Norma J. Thompson
Charles P. Thompson
Rickie D. Thompson

Harold Gilbert
Cornelius Ropp
Dick Moody
Mrs. Lori Reynolds
Jean S. Hall
Iris Archibald
E. Clinton Conrad
Mrs. Charlotte Dozier
Susan Padgett
Mrs. Verle Kramer
David Kramer
Norma Kramer
Mike Kramer
Mark Kramer
Lisa Kramer
Mr. and Mrs. L. F. Swanson
Mr. and Mrs. Harold Rhodes
Tony Lewis
Mr. John Andersen
Mr. Dave Nagle
Mr. and Mrs. Warren Nally
Mrs. Rose Tjarks
James E. and Laura Miller
Mr. and Mrs. Elmo Meiners
Paul W. Sunderland
Mrs. Gordon Essington
Mr. Richard Strebeck
Mr. and Mrs. S. Edmund Cameron
Mrs. J. L. Finn
William S. Middleton
Mr. and Mrs. Roy Main
Mr. Frank Denne
Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Ringler
Mr. and Mrs. Tracy Shields
Paul Johnson
Rudy Ahrens
Mr. Larry Strebeck
Maurine Haines

Mr. and Mrs. Weldon Hansen
Dr. James Hartford
A. J. McKinney
Mrs. Jean Stocker
Mrs. Richard Strebeck, Sr.
Mr. Richard Strebeck, Sr.
Mrs. Eldon Thorndyke
Alice Ogg
Edward W. Ogle
Maurine Ogle
Guy Dole
Cecil Ogle
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Mr. and Mrs. Richard R. Bennett & Jim
Mrs. Rubie Bane
Mr. Robert Strebeck
Leslie E. Mulvany
Jim's Furniture Mart
R. L. Jordan
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Leonard Y. Bennett
Clarice Bennett
Mr. John E. Anderson, Jr.
Mrs. Beverly Anderson
Glenn V. Rutledge
Irene J. Rutledge
Gerald Rudolph
Mr. and Mrs. Tom Tucker
Mrs. Imogene Smith
W. Tom Francis
Helen Francis
Tom Francis Jr.
Debbie Francis
Connie Brown
Ernest E. Brown

Gibson City Area Centennial

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CELEBRATION DANCES COMMITTEE - Loel Jordan

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Mr. and Mrs. Jim Jensen
Mr. and Mrs. R. H. Carlson
Mr. and Mrs. Larry Ricks
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hutchcraft
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Kemple
Mr. and Mrs. Harold Davis

CONCESSIONS COMMITTEE - Frank Stocker

Darrell Volker
Ted Swanson, Jr.
Dick Jardine

PARTICIPATION DIVISION

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MEN'S CHAIRMAN - Robert P. Boyce

BROTHERS OF THE BRUSH - Gene Johnson

Ted Swanson
Darrell Volker
Frank Stocker
Ron Sheppard
Harold Knowles
Darrell Riblet
George Kuntz
Larry Fawver
Jim Miller
Ken Fackler
Bill Fouts

MEN'S HATS AND TIES - Tom Hartford

KANGAROO KOURT COMMITTEE - Dwain Parker

Ed Rhodes
Harold Thomas
Larry Ricks
Ivan Sloat
Garland Craig
Jim Summers
Tony Heideman
Ron Sheppard
Russell Schmidt
Jerry Garard
Homer Osborn
Dave Yates
Dike Eddleman
Howard Ehresman
Patricia Clark
Chief Harry Anderson

CELEBRATION BELLES COMMITTEE - Maria Ehresman

LADIES' SUNBONNETS AND DRESSES COMMITTEE -

Marie Pruitt
Phyllis Cliff
Sue Pruitt

PROMENADE & CARAVAN COMMITTEE - Orren Pierce

SPECTACLE TICKET DIVISION - Jim Thompson
TICKET COMMITTEE - Ron Meiners

PATRONS TICKET COMMITTEE - Fern Carroll

Margaret Anderson
Phyllis Anderson
Marcia Wright
Virginia Ricks
Esther McClure
Gretchen Nelson
Donna Harms
Imogene Smith

ADVANCE SALE COMMITTEE - Teddy Eddleman

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE CHRMN. - Sherri Fawver

AWARDS COMMITTEE CHRMN. - Valeria Hunt

ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE CHRMN

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Co CHRMN - Mrs. Ruth Bucher
Helen Francis
Malinda Bradford
Helen Day
Dwanna McCall
Gere Walter
Pauline Fuoss

USHERS AND GATES COMMITTEE

Dave Herron & Tom Fisher
Boy Scouts

AUDIENCE AREA AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE

Warren Brown

SPECTACLE DIVISION - Glenn Meredith

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Betty Hunt - Chairman
Dr. Chester Chandler - Co Chairman
Evelyn Dueringer
Rosemary Schertz
Sibyl Middleton
Chloe Barrow
Bess Johnson
Valeria Hunt
William Middleton
Jon Hunt

Mary Volden (did all copy work on original history)

PROPERTIES COMMITTEE - Homer Osborn

STAGE HANDS COMMITTEE - Glenn Meredith

COST COMMITTEE - Fred Illius - Rogers Company

Lil Fisher
Jane Burns

CONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE - Bob Duggins

Andy Sommer
Paul Mooney
Tom Shubert
Weldon Hansen
Glenn Meredith
Bill Gifford
Jr. Gifford
Jim Taylor

Lawrence Comer
Richard (Snook) Jordan
Jean Pearson
James Sommer
Virgil Rhodes

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Leigh Ann Bowen
Cathy Garard
Sharon Luedde
Jo Swanson
Marsha Riddle

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Kay Bell

DISTRIBUTIVE COMMITTEE - Mary Hansen

RADIO AND T.V. COMMITTEE - Laura Miller

SPEAKERS COMMITTEE - Karen Smith

SPECIAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE - Marilyn Williams

SPECIAL EVENTS DIVISION - Ruby Smith - Chairman

Lillian Fisher - Co chairman

MERCHANTS COMMITTEE -

Mrs. Frances Reynolds - Ray Petersen

PARADES COMMITTEE - Harold Johnson

Russell Douglas
Robert Leisure
Lee Barry
Civil Defense
Police Department

TRAFFIC AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Ray Bierman - Civil Defense

Ken Curtis
Russell Ehlers
Gene Rankin
Charlie Dreidame
Frank Hendricks
Leonard Bennett
Richard Bennett
Harry Ricks
Harold Johnson
Bob Duggins
Jack Walton
Max Hoover
Bruce Cothorn

PIONEER EVENT COMMITTEE - Georgianna Johnson

HISTORICAL WINDOWS COMMITTEE

Lois Rhodes - Dwanna McCall

MUSIC COMMITTEE - Agnes Simms

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE - Ken Rost

HOSPITALITY CENTER COMMITTEE - Clarice Braatz

Betty Grafton
Cadette Girl Scouts

TIME CAPSULE - Larry Ricks

Gibson City Belle Chapters

LITTLE SHAVERS

LITTLE SHAVERS Mike Stroh, Kim Baily, Richard Horsch, Chris Smith, Tim Smith, Eric Ensing, Ricky Erickson, Chucky Erickson, Arnold Hunt, Robert Scott Nickrent, Richard Patrick Nally, Joe Thomas, Barry Meers, Tim Meers, Kevin Knapp, Mike Knapp, Mickey Taylor, Mark Brownlee, Tim Ricks, Brad Sprau, Robbie Williams, Peter Wohelski, Jeff Bradbury, Eric Timm, Bryan Donner, Mark Andreae, Karn Long, Dennis Stange, Darren Hester, Vince Hester, Craig Patton, Tom Litwiller, Rod Litwiller, Todd Sommer, Scott Yeates, Robbie Hix, Brad Tompkins, Allen Lee Wilkins, Jon Lee Clark, Don Traister, David Traister, William Brokate.

SMOOTHIES

Henry Sievers, E. H. DeArms, Vernie Martin, David Gill, Tom Meers, Lee Barry, Howard Ehresman, Earl Pruitt, Don Douglas, Roger Birky, T. L. Auterman, C. F. Robertson, William Bryant, Sherman Bowan, Charles Bowan, Charles Van Holland, Joe Brooks, Richard W. Strebeck, Sr., Orville Hardy, Floyd Noland, Scott Miller, Deret Moxley, Lance Moxley, Karry Kishner, Eddie Lambert, Richard Davis, Roger Smith, Steve Mulvian, Ken Sprau, Lester Anderson, Stanley Wisegartner, John R. Noble, Weldon Hanson, Ken Meredith, Frank, Oliver, Andrew, J. Anderson, Alva Osman, Fred Friend, Albert Schantz, W. L. Barnhart, John A. Burns, F. E. Walker, Jake Cramer, O. H. Saathoff, Jack Branson, Bill Bullock, Paul Sunderland, Gene Gregory, Arnold Luedde, C. M. Gray, Bernard Finis, Virgil Stewart, Gene Williams, Fred Carroll, Roy Quinn, Charles Letter, John Webb, Laurel Ping, Fred Huston, Merle Brokate, Melvin Rippel, W. C. Munson, Loren Bane, M. L. Utterback, Harold Bonnen, H. H. Palmer, Alvin C. Koon, Kenneth Karr, William Becker, Joe Kolross, Melvin Yeats, Clayton Gramley, Ora Ferguson, Lynch, Joe Nunnick, Roy Schlickman, Jim Mitchell, Henry May, Percy Goodrich, Emery Troyer, Harlan Arens, Stanley W. Davis, Robert Taylor, Dale Moxley, William Smith, Dick Kemple, Ernest Schroeder, Lewis Birky, Bud Reynolds, Harm J. Baker, Ernest W. Ogg, Don Patton, Rick Goben, Richard D. Barnes, William Zimmerman, Lloyd Brokate, Jack Fleck, S. Stephens, Eugene Swearingen, Earl Pruitt, Ray Oglesby, Howard Hutchcraft, Walter H. Arends, Bill Arends, Steve Arends, Robert E. Birkey, Glenn Hart, Larry Darnall, Denry Troyer, William A. Loveless, Bobbie Martin, Cecil F. Aoli, Nelson C. Sommer, James E. Ross, Walter Taylor, Robert McMahon, Edwin Hazen, William C. DeWall, Jr. and Warren Nally.

BROTHERS OF THE BRUSH

BEARDED MANY Robert Boyce, Robert Leisure, Mark Craig, Lyle Pfaff, Don Erickson, Bob Hutchcraft, Jerry Girard, Dean Files, Glen Davis, Doug Hager, Jim Hager, Bob Crossman, O. F. Reis and George L. Moody.

THREE BEES Morris Fox, Donald T. Kincade, L. DeWayne Grafton, Thomas F. Fisher, Henry E. Brickman, Gerald K. Revenough, Glenn A. Richard, Robert E. Peeken, David K. Kaiser, Charles D. Jensen, Wayne A. Rittenhouse, Paul V. Howard, William L. Everett, Steven R. Dickey and D. Glenn Roop.

COFFEE DRINKERS Garland Craig, Albert Bode, W. C. Bryant, Michael Wilson, Gerald M. Osborn, Clyde Day, Ronald Osborn, Homer Osborn, Jerry Garard, Frank E. Fox, Dave Hoaran, Stanley W. Davis, Earl Edmonds and Bud Reynolds.

BROTHERS OF THE BRUSH Bruce Girken, Homer Osborn, James Jackson, George Stevens, Doug Knapp, Bud O. Neal, Michael Wilson, Steve Ort, Clyde Cokely, Bobby Welborn, Richie Swaim, James Hudson, Charles Dewey, Martin Meyer, Howard Moore, Loel Jordan, Robert Duggins, Albert Bode, Frank Hunt, Jr., Ivan Andreae, Herb Persons, Sr., Micheal Wilson, Lester Lammie, Steve Case, Ed Cameron, Robert Bradbury, Don Nelson, James Price, Clyde Day, Charles Woodward, Glen Rutledge, David Nagle, Frank Fox, Glenn Meredith, Russell Coulter, Richard Horsch, Thomas Mulony, Tom Davis, Paul Mooney, Harold W. Underwood, Gary Hoover, James Johnson, Harold Thomas, Vince Fogarty, Vernon Ralston, George Barr, Larry Johnson, Paul Verkler, Lynn Bowen, Warren Clark, Charles R. Crowley, Earl Edmonds, Lester Vinson, Michael Allen, Floyd Brotherton, John Kerchenfaut, David B. Kramer, Ramon Rankin, Tom Tucker, Bill Lindsay, Delmar Schantz, R. H. Hutcherson and Robert L. Seelye.

BELLES AND LITTLE MISS BELLES

Charlotte Clark, Margaret Emly, Patty Emly, Edna Van Scoyoc, Alice Larrison, Melody Peeken, Norma Jean Thompson, Barbara Bouldrey, Alice M. Loveless, Susan McElfresh, Barb Tucker, Marjorie Clark, Margaret Ernst, Marge Ernst, Arlene Strebeck, Sharon Stroh, Patricia Wagner, Vicki Lindsay, Sharon Johnson, Lottie Hutcherson, Mary Jo Main, Beckie Wiebrog, Bobbi Benningfield, Tammy Preston, Debbie Preston, Anna Riggs, Mary Ann Ricks, Marilyn Zander, Diane Hill, Mrs. Gene Rankin, Neva Rankin, Lucille Robertson, Bernia Worley, Velma Taylor, Kathy Taylor, Sheri Bryant, Mrs. Sherman Borden, Mrs. Charles Borden, Mrs. Virginia Ricks, Mrs. Gail Kincade, Mona Van Antwerp, Lucille Fawnsworth, Donna Hoffman, June Leisure, Pat Everett, Gladys Marcellus, Jean Hoffman, Karen Long, Virginia Underwood, Dorothy Bridgewater, Joane Schroeder, Julie Anne Sprau, Helen McAtee, Agnes Stroh, Barbara Leisure, Katharine K. Moody, Carol Leisure, Wilma Crowe, Cynthia Crowe, Candace Crowe, Virginia Bradley, Gladys Fanning, Becky Ricks, Pat Cluck, Maria Young, Helen Osborn, Alvina Miller, Peggy Fields, Holly Tripp, Loretta Kyson, Judy Glascock, Sylvia Smith, Pat Schoolcraft, Ruby Bennett, Grace Bond, Debbie Brooks, Dorothy Brooks, Grace Thorndyke, Leta M. Strebeck, Mabel Teter, Marilyn Shields, Kathleen Sarah Shields, Leora Shields, Mabel Gandy, Barbara Cokely, Mrs. Stroh, Charlotte Nelson, Florence Roop, Lola Reynolds, Eva Mae Long, Wilma Sommer, Leanoir Null, Hilda Mott, Hope Gackay, Donna Hansen, Janet Clements, Marge Bode, Debbie Johnson, Lelia A. Cender, Violet Peeken, Margaret Nelson, Katrina Dewey, Florene Knab, Helen Kemple, Janet Stocker, Lorene Raper, Bessie Oakley, Pat Lambert, Lillian Deason, Gladys Dow, Mary Lange, Margy Moore, Ida Mustafa, Sybil Kramer, Alyce Preston, Lillian Hardy, Ileana Miller, Doretta Johnson, Jodi Miller, Shannon Miller, Helen Schmidt

Mrs. Hutcnison, Carolyn Moxley, Carol Schroeder, Barb Williams, Jessie Davis, Blance Andrews, Leona Hartford, Mary Ann Taylor, Dorothy Shellman, Shirley Reynolds, Pat Marten, Sharon Rigby, Bonnie Byerly, Shelia Wittaker, Flora Price, Phyllis Chambliss, Judy Reitz, Sherry Reitz, Vicki Reitz, Vil Anderson,

Sharon Yates, Laura Sawyer, Marie Campbell, Hilda Preston, Elsie H. Barr, Frances Retter, Delora Lynn Retter, Betty Bradbury, Sally Rohn, Ellen Frieburg, Martha Fasking, Mildred Forrest, Mrs. W. A. Dusola, Janalee Noble, Violet Taylor, Julia McGuire, Cheryl Hester, Ella Craig, Nancy Olivero, Wilma Duggins, Gesina Nelson, Mrs. Osman, Hazel Archibald, Grace Hanley, Cindy Hanley, June Ogg, Georgia Page, Wilma Andreae, Betty Hunt, Sherri Fawser, Carol King, Helen Cornelison, Louise Schantz, Thelma Arobush, Thelma Persons, Laurie Persons, Mona Summers, Elvera Shepleman, Betty Vinson, Claudia Strebeck, Beverly Arnold, Marjorie Miller, Linda Livingston, Carole Netherton, Jane Burns, Betty Sallee, Mary Lou Kelley, Mabel Martens, Thelma Brook, Marjorie Lowry, Bertha Morris, Mrs. Roy Boyd, Catherine Kincaide, Ila Spry, Susie Branson, Betty Keath, Laverne Johnson, Laura Hanley, Mrs. Edgar Cullip, June Stange, Margaret Harding, Ruby Lange, Carol Bullock, Mildred Sunderland, Evelyn Lange, Wilma Tandy, Linda Page, Alice Shields, Dorothy Shields, Rose Ann Hardwick, Kathy Bond, Berandine Bryant, Ruth Oglesby, Bessie Price, Mabel Kender, Rose Day, Virginia Williams, Sharla Williams, Liz Hanson, Janet Hanson, Kathryn Dreidane, Beverly Arnold, Melba Quinn, Shirley Jackson, Nancy Main, Mrs. Lester Anderson, Karen Doman, Wanda Austle, Hazel Gandy, Marica Walker, Betty Grider, Edie Grider, Gail Grider, Mrs. Glen Rutledge, Alita Waggoner, Mae Gardner, Annette Adams, Gladys Smock, Barbara Leisure, Lorette Bode, Terry Fox, Lois Friesie, Joyce Wilson, Mrs. Walker, Mrs. Merle Brokate, Ina Lund, Lorraine Zick, Ethel M. Armstrong, Anna Johnson, Ethel Munson, Hazel Mooney, Mrs. Albert Wilson.

Thelma Colwell, Pauline Busby, Beverley Coons, Helen Kelley, Imogene Gaff, Ellen Johnson, Mrs. Johnson, Evelyn Hendrickson, Ana Taylor, Sandra Dial, Helen Hill, Geneva Lindsey, Mae Brading, Diana Coulter, Beverly Conover, Francis Kolross, Gloria Carlson, Clara Mae Gramley, Velma Parker, Annette Adams, Ruth Ann Williams, Christine Ferguson, Mrs. Lill, Barb Cavinder, Elaine Collett, Fern May, Mary Eckhoff, Mrs. Richard Horsch, Eileen Randolph, Joyce Goff, Gretchen Nelson, Mrs. Emery Troyer, Mrs. Harold Medler, Diana Collings, Margaret Blissard, Berenice Crowley, Ellen Crowley, Genieve Fogles, Emma Ann Davis, Menola Donner, Mrs. Robert Taylor, Bessie Moxley, Lora Brown, Lucy Ruck, Lil Anderson, Maria Hohn, Linda Lynch, Mary Lou Kyle, Marlene Walkers, Kathy Smith, Pauline Ort, Verona Thomas, Anna Martin, Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Russell Martin, Mrs. Wayne Perkins, Ruth Swanson, Mrs. Sam Doman, Madelon Girkin, Ruth Loy, Carol Barry, Helen Tate, Hope Zachary, Eva Mae Loy, Wilma Sommers, Leanoir Null, Hilda Mott, Bessie Rasmussen, Mrs. Roger Birkey, Sherri Birkey, Laurie Birkey, Mrs. Don Smith, Tina Baumen, Juda Baumen, Beverly Fight, Edna Auterman, Dorothy Tinicne, Leona Evans, Susan Ivans, Geri Friesie, Delores

Gibson City Belle Chapters

Friese, Anna Jardine, Jean Jardine, Esther Sparks, Mrs. Bob Hill, Beulah Oneal, Gertrude Hutchcraft, Maxine Arends, Nellie Hudson, Lisa Moore, Kathryn Cameron, Ann Gale, Pearl Gale, Linda Gardner, Darlene Harper, Barbara Rafferty, Evelyn Puls, Shirley Peeken, Ann Hall, Marlene Shreves, Dorothy M. Gilmore, Willa Hart, Topy Wierzoriek, Lena Smith, Frances Bonnen, Carollee Cook, Dorothy Smith, Carmen Karr, Mrs. George E. Smart, Janice K. Barnes, Dorothy Barnes Betty Brokate, Betty Schroeder, Euna Hudson, Mrs. Freddie Hogarty, Freda Gamley, Pauline Mott, Mrs. Wayne R. pp, Betty Oneal, Mrs. Percy Goodrich, Mrs. Ivan Brucker, Betty Copher, Margaret Copher, Daisy Danna, Deana Johnson, Mrs. Joyce Lange, Anita Houran, Virginia Kingsley, Mrs. David Mott, Mrs. Willis J. Sommer, Lucille Gaidar, Delores Walker, Dorothy Sunken, Bernice Hustedt, Betty Meiners, Linda Walker, Linda Hunt, Evelyn Byerline, Bonnie Rutledge, Ella Speedie, Mrs. Herb Smith, Mary Loveless, Marsha Lage, Bertha Mott, Jennie Govein, Sarah Tabbs, Eva Steinberg, Judy A. Prenz, Marie Whaiton, Loretta Woodward, Rose Marie Birkby, Charlotte Clark,

Laurie Bradbury, Connie Rickey, Connie Frieburg, Kristin Mc Guire, Sherrie Culbertson, Darla Forrest, Lori Timm, Prudence Donner, Christine Donner, Jane Andraee, Karen Long Beth Fawver,

Beth Hutchcraft, Lori Hutchcraft, Carole Neffertout, Patricia Barb Barry, Mildred Shaner, Irene Shivers, Diana Hester, Shelley Rowditch, Maxine Brock, Laura Hix, Linda Hunt, Jan Hunt, Vanessa Taylor, Lorrie Perkins, Vonda Coulter, Sherri McKee, Robin Smith, Anna Sievers, Tiffani Sommer, Margy Walker, Lisa Walker, Jennie Perkins, Brenda Cressman, Wilston girls, Cindy Dial, Lola Williams, Vicki Williams, Julia Tompkins, Lisa Tompkins, Angie Eckhoff, Julia Crowley, Kristie Sue Nickrent, Shannon Marie Lynch, Terry McCarthy, Delene Riblet, Roberta May, Tami Brokate, Charlotte Tubbs, Alice Tubbs, Carla Gesell, Sherrie Pruitt, Tenna Cliff, Keria Riblet, Kathy Riblet, Mubelle Lee Johnson, Patty Lange, Kelly Tapscott, Kim Tapscott

CENTENNIAL BELLE CHAPTERS

SUNBONNET SIES Jennie Aik, Diane Acree, Margaret Sommer, Ann Collette, Phyllis B. mar, Jane Beale, Olney A. Vei, a Alice Maria Brock, Betty Barry, Serita Allen, Margaret A. Margaret Brandt, Pal Fields, Kelly Vene, Marlena Deason, Euna Anderson, Emma Wicks, Deloris McKay, Lucille Buebe, Janice Mills, Mary Myers, Florence Wright, Ruby Furr, Evelyn Fawver, Phyllis Acree, Ann Dunlap, Cindy Shaw, Laritt Reynolds, Tamara Allen, Juanita Yeats, Patricia Yeats, Virginia Mouser, Reba McGuire, E. Standley, Bernice Singer, Dorothy Oakes, Alice Acree Betty Thrlick and Vera Marcellus.

GUTHRIE BELLES Evelyn Leathers, Doris Rutledge, Mildred Swearingen, Cecilia Anderson, Rose Tjarks, Daisy Brownlee, Alma Richey, Betty Ralston, Anna Borchers, Irene Meyers, Ann Holsten, Myrtle Borchers, Bess Johnson, Hilda Blum, Gertrude Marcellus, Marie Dodson, Helen Engstrand, Kathryn Cameron, Carolyn Brandt, Mabel Welsh Elizabeth Cowell, Alice Borchers, Mabel Hazen, Lucille Platt, Louise Swearingen, Laura Steinhelper, Ginga Blizzard, Marcia Leathers, Mary Beth Leathers,

Ethel Uffers and Janice Bond.

LIBERATED DINGALINGS — Kay Bell, Betty Heidemman, Judy Reitz, Beverly Hendricks, Christine Hazen, Lil Fisher, Nancy Timm, Anna Marie Taylor, Liz Hansen, Jackie Curtis, Betty Knapp, Cheryl Fox, Dorla Parker, Linda Persons, Viola Finis, Mildred Perkins, Doris Arnold, Kathy Carpenter, Mary Lou Miller, Ruby Smith and Wilma Swanson.

FASHION FELLIES — Linda Sprau, Virginia Underwood, Aileen Underwood, Margaret O'Neal, LaVonne Moody, Mary Jane Patton, Mary Carol Hansen, Delorice Baily, Thelma Young, Marge Kreiter, Deanna Saver, Marge Peters and Pam Jordan

B & P W DOLLS — Donna Harms, Doris Anderson, Lela Z. Hay, Erma Hoover, Carol Hutchcraft, Phyllis Anderson, Leona Johnson, Phyllis Leonard, Hazel Troy, Marinel Jones, Vivian Comer, Geneva Brooks, Margaret Ailes, Fern Mildred McQuiggan, Rena Wilcox, Fern Carroll, Juanita Boyce, Marilyn Riblet, Virginia Ryan, Genevieve Nickrent, Pauline Brooks, Imogene Swann, Vauna Jones, Sharon Jones, Louise Thompson, Ethel Kumler, Margaret Wright, Alice Jesse, Lou Eeva Tesch, Carla Sue Rowcliffe and Marcia Wright.

OTT'S BELLES AND FRIENDS — Patricia Remley, Loretta Riley, Matthe Cender, Emma Riblet, Frances Bane, Ethel Hays May, Mabel O'Neal, Lorene O'Neal, Mrs. Gene O'Neal, Phyllis Cliff, Maria Bane, Florence Rhodes, Emma Coit, Lyda Cender, Alice Summer, Mary Cline, Mary Nickel, Wilma Hendricks, Anna Oliviero, and Frances Becker.

DAINTY DYNOS — Sharon J. Hieser, Vera H. Bane, Susie Oyer, Phyllis M. Anderson, Elaine W. Hawthorne, Jean Engling, Barbara Heuli, Della Tisford, F. Lindaker, Mary Licht, Joyce E. Hagly, Susie Hoffman, Linda C. Ganssen, Nancy Reynolds, Wanda Jacobs, Susan L. Arnold, Kathy Schultz, Susan Simmons, Linda Lindelof, Pat Drake and Cleona Grant

BUSTLE BELLES — Jean Stocker, Judy Petersen, Karen May, Judy Glascock, Phyllis Donner, Regina Johnson, Mary Jane Patton, Betty Vuyverberg, Edna Samonds, Susan Strebeck, Marilyn Riblet, Mary Jane Hill and Jo Swanson.

THE FLOWER BELLES Mrs. Charles C. Russell, Mrs. Russell Douglas, Mrs. Darlene Moon, Mrs. Donald Douglas, Mrs. Thomas Rhodes, Mrs. Phyllis Coons, Mrs. Mary Rainwater, Mrs. Janice McCullough, Karen Rhodes and Connie Rhodes.

DING DONG BELLES — Bee Diggle, Geneva Calhoun, Jack Walker, Val Hunt, Jean Hunt, Margaret Hunt, Gayle Hager, Darlene Tucker, Marti Hager, Helen Day and Jan Noble.

EASTERN STAR BELLES Georgianna Johnson, Clarice Bennett, Ethel L. Zimmerman, Mae Meredith, Sandra Meredith, Sylvia M. Weidner, Gladys Wallis, Wanda Curtis, Mikki Boyd, Ellen Boyd, Jane Bush, Eva Cook, Cecilia Anderson, Edna Schnittker, Freda Bedel, Bea Warman, Dorothy Rudolph, Susan Rudolph, Barbara Lyons and Sonja Shuhert

GIBSON GIRLS — Marion Knapp, Olive Bertram, Eunice Jones, Mary Tomkins, Alice Ogg, Jean Hall, Betty Mooney

Joyce Kumler, Rosemary Lehman, and Marilyn Steinman.

SOYA BELLES — Freeda Speers, Joann Pearson, Cathy Goff, Greichen Nelson, Margaret Tongate, Carla Gravlin, Sharon Nunamaker, Patti Graft, Bette Lain, Imogene Smith, Margaret Rando, Audrey Robertson, Donna Lindelof, Bettie Main, Clara F. McNarry, Darlene Beil and Susie Thackeray.

PAPER DOLLS — Brenda Welbourn, Ila Kumler, Norma Kramer, Val Hunt, Hazel Witt, Jean Hunt, Virginia Christensen, Johanna Giseburt, Nadine Tomblin, Sandi Craig, Linda Gregory, Ann Rood, Dorla Parker, Rita Peters, Marie Garvis, Ethel Woolley, Helen Andraee, Linda Barrow, Joyce Hix, Jean Schertz, Cheryl Hester, Vicki Richard, Jane Ferguson and Sharon Asher.

V.F.W. BELLES — Imogene Ping, Nadine Tomblin, Eileen Schutte, Wilma Hendricks, Marion Warner, Mildred Taylor, Jean Crossman, Betty Pearson, Pam Brown, Mary Jensen, Zelma Bane, Dieta Lantz, Elma Stewart, Wilma Tandy, Anna Andraee, Shirley Benson, Susan Douglas and Kay Bane.

GOLD DUSTERS — Violet Schmidt, Liz Kumler, Frances Oneal, Frances McMahon, Nan Bright, Margo Martin, Jean Soslin, Mary Ann Grider, Nancy Kumler, Claudia Murphy, Rose Godsey and Jan Bickel

JOYFUL BELLES — Chloe R. Barrow, Mrs. Poyal Dickerman, Elizabeth Elkin, Mrs. Paul Elkin, Mrs. Mabelle Farlin, Mrs. Lula Farris, Mrs. Stanhope Foster, Mrs. Blanche Hollen, Helen Foster Kelley, Mrs. Grave Moody, Mrs. Roy Schlickman, Mrs. C. L. Shaner, Mrs. Doris Tjardes, Mrs. Mont Ulterback, Mrs. Ralph Warfield, Mrs. George Stolz and Mrs. Richard Schertz

SOUTH SIDE BELLES — Mae Reynolds, Virginia Nelson, Doris Young, Imogene Loy, Margaret Gregerson, Bonnie Warsaw, Lila Rankin, Marcia Nickrent, Linda Ehlers, Marion Green, Mary Alice McRae, Shirley Reynolds, Lucille Sisk, Sally Reynolds, Nellie Osborne, Neva Rankin, Fran Young, Patricia Cribeter, Betty Young, Helen Ernest and Margaret Barns.

OLIVE FOLEY — Mrs. A. W. Johnson, Mrs. Elizabeth Salvarys, Mrs. Harlan Arens, Mrs. Howard Ehresman, Mrs. Don Schroeder, Mrs. James Mitchell, Miss Gladys Dueringer, Miss Evelyn Dueringer, Mrs. Raymond Gill, Mrs. Warren Nally, Mrs. Emma Kidd, Mrs. Lena Shields, Mrs. Pauline Fuoss, Mrs. Sylvia Halterberg, Mrs. F. E. Walker, Mrs. Chester Chandler, Mrs. Agnes M. Simms, Mrs. Josephine M. FitzHenry, Mrs. Hazel Boyer, Mrs. Sibyl Middleton, Mrs. Mary Frances Stubbart, Mrs. Harold Buesing, Mrs. Lee Barry and Mrs. C. F. Robertson.

SOCIAL COUNTRY BELLES — Yvonne Huston, Jenedia Jensen, Pauline Cullip, Buehlah Reiners, Vandel Whitten, Dorothy Huston, Emma Jensen, Dol Nelson, Wilma Giffard, Minnie Huston, Elinor Nelson, Eleanor Stolz, Pauline Helmeick and Gladys Taylor.

GARBIE BELLES — Helen Cramer, Bessie Caler, Clara Thedens, LaVonne Riblet, Jessie Roesch, Ella Beck, Grace Biefeldt, Ann Brokate, Edna Brokate, Ella Clausen, Maxine Cook, Edna Sandor, Anna Schroeder, Clara Schroeder, Elsie Schroeder, Cora Glascock, Le Ella Bane, Ann Beck, Kathy Riblet and Kate Schroeder.

THE GIBSON CITY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Down through the years the progress of Gibson City has been in a large part, the result of work by its Chamber of Commerce.

The Gibson City Chamber of Commerce has been supported by progressive business people. It was responsible for assisting the Indiana - based Central Soya Company to locate its second plant - first in Illinois - in Gibson City. Central Soya soon became the largest employer in the community, and a "good citizen", with its contributions of money and materials for many civic causes, and the donation of time by many of its executives and employees.

The Gibson Chamber of Commerce played a large part in locating the M & W Gear Company plant in the mid - 1960s at the south edge of the community. The company had its start at Anchor, where it grew so rapidly that it soon needed larger quarters, a larger labor pool, and access to greater transportation possibilities than were available at Anchor. The company became Gibson City's largest employer by 1970, as it climbed to the top of "short line" farm machinery manufacturers in the nation.

The original Gibson Canning Company, sponsor of one of the finest amateur basketball teams in the United States at one time, named "Yours Truly" after the firm's popular brand name, was later acquired by Stokely - Van Camp. The company cans sweet corn, sweet peas and lima beans, and is an important seasonal employer. It is of considerable other economic value because of the large acreage it owns and contracts from others for its crops.

As Gibson City reached its Centennial year, a number of other important local industries had been located in the community largely through the efforts of the Gibson Chamber of Commerce. Among them are the Nation - Wide

Glove Co., Shaffer Spring Co., and Electronics Components, Inc.

Davis Welding and Manufacturing Co. was a hometown industry that grew with the development of new products. Kramer Publishing Co. became the central printing plant for the Gibson City Courier and seven other area weekly newspapers. Noble Bros. was a major seed merchandiser in the country.

But the Gibson Chamber of Commerce did more than attract new industries and encourage the growth of already existing companies. It annually sponsors and finances downtown Christmas lighting and decorations, and brings Santa Claus to town each year for visits with children of the community just before Christmas. Merchants sponsor periodic Dollar Days and Sidewalk Days events, as well as other special events for the budget - minded in the Gibson City trading area.

The Chamber for years has sponsored, together with farmers of the community, the annual Community Sale event, on the first Thursday of March. The organization annually recognizes the "Outstanding Citizen", and one year named the entire volunteer Gibson City Fire Department for the honor.

In many other ways the members of the Gibson Chamber of Commerce have acted to promote the betterment of the Gibson City community in all ways. Its membership consists not only of merchants and business men and women, but of those in the professions and the service occupations, representatives of local industries and utilities, and ministers of the community's churches.

The Gibson City community is today what it is because of the efforts of many organizations and individual citizens, and the Gibson Chamber of Commerce has earned a large part of the credit.

PAST PRESIDENTS
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

1949 - 1950	John (Jack) Bradford
1950 - 1951	Lyle Edel
1951 - 1952	Wally Lamb
1952 - 1953	Clifford Shaner
1953 - 1954	D. S. Stoker
1954 - 1955	John Carson
1955 - 1956	Clifford Orr
1956 - 1957	Verle Kramer
1957 - 1958	Verle Kramer
1958 - 1959	Frank Hunt Jr.
1959 - 1960	Wes Calhoun
1960 - 1961	William S. Middleton
1961 - 1962	Les Lammle
1962 - 1963	Jim Hager
1963 - 1964	David Kramer
1964 - 1965	Orren Pierce
1965 - 1966	Jon Hunt
1966 - 1967	Emery Cender
1967 - 1968	Max Hoover
1968 - 1969	Dick Kemple
1969 - 1970	George Stevens
1970 - 1971	Ernie Brown
1971 - 1972	Jim Thompson

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Jim's Food Center and Arends & Sons



Charter officers of the BPW were (seated, from left) Mrs. Imogene Smith, Mrs. Eleanor Gilmore and Mrs. Alice Ogg; (standing) Mrs. Esther Hamburg, Mrs. Darlene Tucker and Mrs. Jane Burns.

BPW

The Business and Professional Women's Club of Gibson City was chartered June 19, 1964, with 54 members. At the end of the first year there were 100 members.

Membership is open to any woman in the area who is a professional or business woman, and gets a regular pay check. The purpose is to elevate the standard for women in business and professions.

The charter officers were Mrs. Eleanor Gilmore, president, who was also the president the second year; Mrs. Alice Ogg, first vice president; Mrs. Darlene Tucker, 2nd vice president; Mrs. Imogene Smith, recording secretary;

Mrs. Jane Burns, corresponding secretary; and Mrs. Esther Hamburger, treasurer.

Other presidents have been Mrs. Alice Ogg, Mrs. Imogene Smith, Mrs. Margaret Anderson, Mrs. Fern Carroll and Mrs. Phyllis Anderson. Mrs. Marneil Jones will be serving as president next year.

The club has a dinner meeting at one of the churches on the third Tuesday of each month.

The four people responsible for organizing the club were Mrs. Margaret Smith, Mrs. Eleanor Gilmore, Mrs. Alice Ogg and Mrs. Lloyd Patterson.

GIBSON CITY JUNIOR WOMAN'S CLUB

On July 7, 1938, in the home of Mrs. M. Malone, the Gibson City Junior Woman's Club was organized. There were 43 members. Meetings were held the second and fourth Monday evenings of each month in the American Legion rooms of the old library. By the end of the year the club had a membership of 70.

The first officers were Genevera Carlson, president; Helen Ogg, vice president; Lucille Miller, secretary; Doris Tjardes, treasurer; Zola Ropp, leader and Mrs. M. Malone, senior advisor.

On December 28, 1938, a Christmas Charity Ball was held in the K. P. Hall to help finance their first project - a milk fund the grade school. They cleared \$36.00 and it was deemed a great success.

As the membership grew smaller, home's of members were used as the meeting place. During the late 1940's and 50's bi-monthly meetings were held at the Woman's Club Memorial Building as membership reached a high of some 80 members. The club was very active in raising funds for the Girl Scout Cabin in the late 1950's.

In Centennial year 1971 (33 years later) the Gibson City Junior Woman's Club has a membership of 15. They meet the second Thursday evening of each month at member's homes.

The officers for 1971 - 72 are Mrs. John Bell, president; Mrs. James Hazen, vice president; Mrs. Tom Fox, secretary; and Mrs. Robert Hendricks, treasurer.

The organization is a volunteer service group offering many different fields of interest. Some of our community

projects are baking cookies for the hospital and Gibson Manor, planting flowers in the North Park each spring, the student loan fund, the migrant council and sponsoring a Girl Scout troop, to name a few. Federation projects include Brain Research, Scholarships for Teachers of Exceptional Children, National Association for Retarded Children, Project Concern and many others.

Our main fund raising project has been the sale of Trick of Treat candy sold annually in the month of October.

The General Federation of Women's Clubs, of which we are a member, is the largest woman's organization in the world.





ARTHUR WOOD

GIBSON LODGE NO. 733

Gibson Lodge No. 733 Ancient Free and Accepted Masons first received its charter in October 1875. There were 41 charter members. They are listed below: Henry A. Raney - Worship Master; Freeman S. Church - S. W.; Wm. A. Westrope - J. W.; Caleb McKeever, Samuel A. Thompson, Wm. Cornell, Jr., John H. Gaston, Perry L. Leonard, Napoleon Snyder, Jas. R. Lott, Joshua E. Davis, Samuel A. Armstrong, John McKay, Frank C. McDowell, Thomas C. Wilson, Jos. N. Putney, Cornelius Dyer, Samuel J. LeFevre, Thaddeus S. Collins, John H. Bulger, Geo. S. Eggleston, Walter H. Cornell, Wm. M. Bailey, Chas. H. Yeomans, Thomas H. Kingsley, W. S. McLead, Wm. H. Simms, Timothy Ross, Geo. McNabney, Geo. W. Wood, Geo. Mullendore, Chas. P. Younggreen, Anderson L. Ballard, Dwight A. Dungan, John R. Gilchrist, Lester S. Heath, James N. Hoskins, John H. Collier, Andrew Jordan, Joshua R. McClelland, Chas. E. Wilson.

There have been at least two meeting places. One was above what is now Rose's Shoppe. How long they met there is not certain. Many of the records were destroyed by a fire. The present meeting place, above Loy's Store, was originally Lambs Furniture Store and Funeral Home. They have been meeting there for the last 50 to 60 years. At one time the Commandery also met in the present lodge hall.

The photo is of Brother Arthur E. Wood, who transferred to Gibson Lodge in 1901. Brother Wood had the great honor of being elected Grand Master of Masons of the State of Illinois. This honor comes to few men. Brother Wood was elected in 1923. Due to ill health he resigned after one year of service of what is a two year term. He passed away in 1926.

The lodge membership now, 96 years later, exceeds 235 and is a very active organization.

Lillian Rebekah Lodge No. 146 was instituted Nov. 18, 1885, with 22 members. During the years between 1885 and 1970 a total of 705 have held membership in the lodge.

At present the membership is 18, including four 50 - year members.

Mrs. Mayme Gilmore was the Noble Grand when the order was instituted in Gibson City. Her husband, Ira, was active in the Odd Fellows Lodge. Mrs. Lola Reynolds is currently serving as Noble Grand and Mrs. Lulu Phares as Vice Grand.

The Odd Fellow Lodge No. 542 built the building now owned by the American Legion. It was built in 1913 or '14. The building contractor was George C. Pinkley and the building committee was composed of J. A. Shaw, Ira Gilmore, N. B. Tyler, Fred Harm and J. P. Myers. After the building was sold, the Rebekah Lodge moved to a room over the Oscar Buesing Pool Hall. In 1965 this building burned and everything was lost. The Rebekah Lodge moved to the First Christian Church and presently meets in the new church building.

THE GIBSON CITY WOMAN'S CLUB

The Gibson City woman's club was organized in October, 1895, as a study group with a membership of 25 women in the home of Mrs. J. B. Foley with Mrs. Emmanuel Lowry as assistant hostess.

Meetings were held in the homes until a room in Moyer Library became available. From that time the membership has increased to 100 or more.

In 1920 the club became federated with the state; in 1924 with the 17th district, in 1933 with the county and with the general federation in 1945.

The woman's club has helped with many welfare and civic projects over the years, in co - operation with other groups and has contributed generously to several community funds.

In 1956 Mrs. Edna Phillips Coal, a long time member, bequeathed the Gibson City Woman's Club the sum of \$15,000 to purchase a club house. This money, minus an inheritance tax bought the partly constructed building at the corner of North Church and 18th Streets where the Woman's Club Memorial Building now stands, and completed the structure. Club meetings and other gatherings are held there.

MODERN WOODMEN OF AMERICA

Modern Woodmen of America, a fraternal organization, established camp no. 235 in Gibson City early in the 1900's and still has an active group of members which hold monthly meetings. This camp had a very active drill team that traveled around Central Illinois putting on the work of the organization.

THE GIBSON CITY COIN CLUB

The Gibson City Coin Club was organized in October of 1964. It has a present membership of 25 active members who were asked by the area centennial committee to help with the programs. Harold Underwood and Robert Crossman were appointed to represent the club and with a few suggestions from different people, they drew a sketch and designed the medallion which the centennial committee accepted.

ROTARY CLUB DIST. 649

The Gibson City Rotary Club was organized June 16, 1964, and held its charter night September 24, 1964.

The club meets each Wednesday night at Jake and Kate's. Rotarians of Gibson City were presented the District 649 Community Service Award in 1970 and 1971 for participation in community activities.

Some of their community service projects include: Providing benches and play equipment at Lowry Park; assist in sponsoring a nursing scholarship; sponsor a delegate to Boy's State; financially support the Student Loan Fund; co-sponsors of the annual All-Sports Banquet honoring high school athletes; maintenance of steam engine in the south park; sponsor annual flea market;

Provided new water fountain in business district; sponsor music scholarship; recognition of scholars; gun safety program; bicycle safety program; installed sewer drain and brought in water and installed toilets in Boy Scout Cabin in south park; invested \$500 in Gibson City Centennial Celebration.

Officers of the club during 1970 - 71 are Dick Moody, president; Lee Barry, vice president; Art Benz, secretary; and Bill Anderson, treasurer.

Other members who have served president of the club are as follows: Charles Hamm, Larry Williams, David Gill, Charles Crowley, Donald Trotter and Kenneth Meredith.

ROYAL NEIGHBORS OF AMERICA FRATERNAL LIFE INSURANCE

Royal Neighbors of America, Fraternal Life Insurance, was founded as a social group in 1888. It was known as the Ladies auxiliary to the Modern Woodmen of America.

Royal Neighbors of America was chartered as a fraternal benefit society in Illinois, March 21, 1895.

The first Supreme office was located in Peoria, Ill., in 1894. In 1908 the National Headquarters were moved to Rock Island, Ill. and are still located there.

Notice to the effect that R.N.A. ceased to be an auxiliary to Modern Woodmen was published in July 1929.

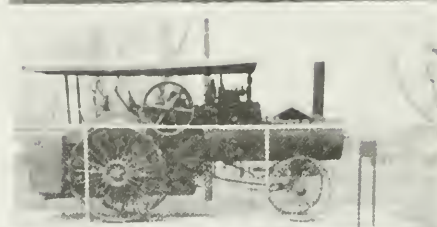
The Royal Neighbor Home for the benefit of aged members, was built in Davenport, Iowa, and dedicated July 18, 1931.

In September 1961, the R.N.A. fraternal scholarship program was authorized by the Board of Supreme Directors, offering scholarships on a competitive basis to young adult members of the Society.

April 6, 1900, Gibson, Ill. received its R.N.A. charter for adults. The petition for the charter was signed by: Dr. O. A. Coss, Dr. F. B. Lorell, Mrs. Martha Jordon, Mrs. Ida Swanson, Mrs. Lottie Swanson, Mrs. Luella Brown, Mrs. Julia Prince, Ms. Emma Grim, Mrs. M. Christensen, Mrs. Calnie Grapes, Mrs. Rosa Claypool, Mrs. McDowell, James Jordon, Mrs. Pernia Keith, O. C. Keith, Mrs. Ashby, Mr. M. Christensen, Mr. Wm. Rick, Mrs. Rick, Mr. C. W. Brown, Miss Christensen.

The society first held their meetings in the Woodsmen Hall and also the K.P. Hall. The first line of officers installed were: Oracle - C. W. Brown; past oracle - Miss Christensen; vice oracle - Emma Grim, chancellor - Ida Swanson; recorder-Pernia Keith; receiver-Martha Jordon; marshall-Julia Prince; ass't marshal - Mrs. Amanda Ashby; inner sentinel - Lottie Swanson; outer sentinel - James Jordon; manager - Mr. O. C. Keith; manager - Mrs. Calnie Grapes; manager - Mrs. Rosa Claypool; physicians - Dr. Lorell and Dr. Coss.

Gibson City received the Juvenile Charter on Jan. 6, 1920



and the names of the first juveniles were inscribed on the charter as follows: Robert Chippendale, Faye Johnson, Gladys Leonard, Mattie McAtee, Frances Poppett, Leah Thomas, Evan Rick, Lola Sawyer, Bertha Swanson, Theodore Q. Swanson, Guy Thomas.

Gibson City was host in 1970 for the Ford County R.N.A. 49th Convention. R. N. A. met in the American Legion Hall for a number of years and now meet at the Del-Co cafe.

DRUMMER CHAPTER NO. 822 ORDER OF EASTERN STAR

A preliminary meeting was called Sept. 23, 1919, to organize a chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star in Gibson City. The following people were present: Mrs. Vina Barrow, Miss Elizabeth Bartlett, Mrs. Margaret Grant Main, Mrs. Pearle Eggleston, Mrs. Mary D. Bartlett, Mrs. Fannie E. Cooper, Mrs. Hester Wilson, Mrs. Lucile Denne, Mrs. Nettie Gill, Mrs. Maude Means, Miss Elizabeth Shaner, Mrs. Della Lamb, Mrs. Cleo Lamb, Mrs. Cora Barnhart, Mrs. Lena Denne, Miss Anna Day, Mrs. Maude Tatman Schumaker, Mrs. Martha J. Crammond, Mrs. Zaidee Phillips, Mrs. Margaret A. Wash, Mr. Bryson Strauss, Mrs. Gertrude M. Strauss, Mr. W. Shumway Lamb, Mrs. Mollie Alice Hay, Mrs. Robena Newcomb and Martha J. Crammond as chairman.

It was decided that meetings would be held the first and third Tuesdays of the month and that a constitutional number of persons, consisting of 23 ladies and 2 master Masons had signed the petition for Dispensation for forming a new chapter. The petition was forwarded to the Grand Chapter of Illinois. On October 2, 1919, the dispensation from the Grand Chapter was received, authorizing that Drummer Chapter be instituted and become invested with full powers as a chapter.

The Chapter was formally instituted October 22, 1919. The commission was read whereby the authority was shown that Brother A. G. Wascher, Worthy Patron of Prospect Chapter No. 367, Paxton, Illinois was duly appointed Deputy Worthy Grand Patron and officers were appointed by him to assist in the work of instituting the Chapter.

First officers of Drummer Chapter were: Bryson Strauss, worthy patron; Fannie Cooper, associate matron; Cora Barnhart, secretary; Lena Denne, treasurer; Mollie Alice Hay, conductress; Gertrude Strauss, assoc. conductress; Elizabeth Bartlett, Adah; Nettie Gill, Ruth; Margaret Main, Esther; Margaret Wash, Martha; Maude Means, Electa; Martha Crammond, chaplain; Hester E. Wilson, organist; Mary D. Bartlett, warder; Lucile Denne, marshal and Pearl Eggleston, sentinel.

The charter of Drummer Chapter was received from Grand Chapter October 5, 1920.

In 1964 Ariel Chapter, Fisher, Illinois merged with Drummer Chapter.

Drummer Chapter has flourished spreading charity, truth and loving kindness and now has 253 members.



BRYSON STRAUSS
FIRST WORTHY PATRON



MRS. BRYSON STRAUSS
FIRST WORTHY MATRON

SCOUTING IN GIBSON CITY

BOY SCOUTS

Founded

Rev. C. J. Robertson of the Christian Church founded the Boy Scouts in 1915 in Gibson City. It was an independent troop chartered directly from New York City headquarters. The first leader was O. C. Oakley (familiarily known as "Oakie") Means. He was assisted at camp during the first years by Mervin LeValley. "Oakie" served in the capacity of leader for many faithful years.

Re-Chartered

In 1939 - 40 Mr. Means re-chartered the Lone Troop into the Arrowhead Council of Boy Scouts of America with head office in Champaign. For the past thirty years the Boy Scouts have operated as part of Arrowhead Council.

Meeting Place

The American Legion Post had a cabin in the block south of the North Park, now the Chas. Grider's back yard. It was built of 2' x 4's and beaver board by Jack Nagle's father. It was moved to the South Park where it was bricked in early in the 40's. It was then donated to the Boy Scouts.

Camps

In 1915 the boys camped south of Mahomet along the Sangamon River. They went by horse and buggy, which was a 1½ day drive. In the 1920's the troop changed camp sites a number of times, ranging from very close to Gibson City to southwest of Mahomet. In the late 20's and early 30's they settled on a camp site about one - half mile east of the East Bend Mennonite Church north of Fisher. The Hermit's Cabin near Fisher was near an annual encampment.

Many happy memories surround their camping experiences. The big cook tent was piled high with canned corn and beans from the Gibson Canning Factory. Water was brought every day by a Model - T Ford through the gully to the East Bend Church and back to camp. On visitors' night friends and families attended, and often an Indian Pow - wow was held. Every year the boys built a stone dam in the river and stairs in the clay bank to facilitate getting down to the water to wash dishes.

Since 1943 the boys have usually camped at Camp Drake, the Council camp in the Oakwood area. This two - week camping period became the high light of the year with swimming, five - mile hikes, and the ceremony of the Order of the Arrow. In the 1950's a canoe trip to Region 7 Canoe Base was held. The Explorer Post spent five days in the wilderness of the Michigan Peninsula. This involved traveling by map and compass, getting lost, carrying 70 lb. packs, learning to paddle a canoe on a big lake against the wind, as well as learning to make a real camp site.

GIRL SCOUTS

Founded

In 1932 a group of about six girls were wanting to form a club. They had been reading Girl Scout magazines and were impressed with the Girl Scout activities in other towns and states. Mrs. L. A. Barrow organized and had chartered the first Girl Scout troop in Gibson City, in April 1934. Mrs. Doris Johnson Suter was the first troop leader, and there were 56 girls in the troop. They were of the 7th and 8th grade age

group. In 1940 the first Brownie troop was organized for 2nd and 3rd grade girls. By 1955 there were 9 troops of 130 girls active in the program, a senior troop of high school girls having been added. In 1970 there were 8 troops of 135 members.

Meeting Places

The first 2 or 3 meetings were held in the Boy Scout Cabin. The early Girl Scouts met in rooms in the Grade School basement and in parents' homes for many years. On May 30, 1959, the newly built Girl Scout cabin was dedicated. The modern, brick, fireproof structure was built by dads and local volunteers under the direction of Harvey Rasmussen, who volunteered to be construction chairman. The plans were drawn up by his son, Robert, an architecture student at University of Illinois. Practically everyone in the community donated time and money to the project. Local organizations, the Community Chest, and individuals donated money, in addition to that raised by the troops. At the dedicatory service, the V.F.W. dedicated a flag pole at the site and also presented the girls with a flag which had flown over the White House. The cabin is located on land that Mr. L. A. Barrow had purchased and donated to the city to be used for recreation and or a park. The baseball park is located on this same land.

In 1955 the Girl Scouts were changed from a Lone Troop status to affiliation with the Green Prairie Council, Champaign area, later named Green Meadows Girl Scout Council of Illinois, Inc.

Camps

The Girl Scouts enjoyed camping from the very beginning. At first camping was done in tents - and still is. Outdoor cooking was a big thing, and bean - hole cooking was very popular. This is where a large hole is dug in the ground, a good bed of hot coals is laid, and an entire meal can be cooked underground. In 1970 the Girl Scouts are still using this method of outdoor cooking.

Camping was done at Foster's Grove, at the Hermit's Cabin near Fisher, and also at Camp Drake near Danville.

Day Camp was held in the very beginning and has continued through the years. In the present day, Day Camp is held for one whole week.

Camping for one week or two still continues since 1934. The Girl Scouts used to camp at Lake Bloomington with the entire camp staff being volunteer mothers and older girls. About 1944 the girls began using Camp Kiwanis near Mahomet. This camp is still being used by the Gibson City Girl Scouts and had been enlarged considerably. Another camp site is Wa-ha-na-ha near Gilman. Singing around the campfire at night has long been a tradition of the Girl Scouts.

War Projects

The Girl Scouts collected grease in a "Fats Drive", and in one paper drive alone they collected 15,189 pounds of old newspapers.

Troop Projects

The Girl Scouts have sold cookies since 1938 - 39. The first couple of years the cookies were baked by the Harder's Bakery. In 1940, the first factory made cookies were sold. There was only one kind and they sold for 25 cents per box. Each cookie was stamped with the Girl Scout emblem. Today the girls are still selling cookies. There are 5 kinds to select from, they cost 50 cents a box, are still stamped with the Girl Scout emblem, and the money is still being used to pay for

troop camping.

Girl Scout calendars were sold as far back as 1945 for 25 cents. They are still being sold with the price being only 35 cents.

The girls used to work for the community in the areas of the elderly and the needy. Today the Girl Scouts are doing the same. They seriously carry out their pledge to do a good deed. This has been proved in 1969-70 when one troop volunteered three afternoons a week to be with the elderly at the Gibson Manor and were highly commended for their volunteer work.

4-H CLUB HISTORY OF GIBSON CITY

The first 4-H club in the Gibson City area was a boys club started apparently in 1928 with John Haypenny as the first leader. George Swaim was the farm advisor at that time. The club was composed of about 12 boys and projects carried were beef, swine and a hybrid corn project. Hybrid corn was just becoming available and the boys planted an acre of a particular variety as their 4-H project.

The girl's club was probably started about 1928 or 29. Among the first leaders were Mrs. Eleanor Onken, Mrs. Deana Warfield, Mrs. Raymond Green, Mrs. P. M. Kerchenaut, Mrs. Merritt Kerchenaut, and Mrs. Carl Beecher. The first projects were clothing construction projects. Cooking as a 4-H project did not start until about 1936.

Alice Green Siegfried, now of Scottsdale, Arizona, was the first Ford County delegate to 4-H Club Congress in Chicago in 1936. She earned the trip through her work in sewing construction and modeling.

4-H, in both agriculture and homemaking areas, has been more or less continuous since its start. The name of the first girls club was Blue Ribbon which the club today still uses.

4-H CLUBS

The Ford County Extension Service first was organized in 1919 to provide farmers with production management information. At that time the farm bureau was organized to give local support to extension programs.

In 1922 the first 4-H club "Burr Oak", was organized at Sibley under the leadership of Louis Rust. The standard project was swine.

In 1935 Home Economics Extension was organized and supported by the home bureau. The name was changed to the Home Economics Extension Association in 1967 and today about 280 women members participate and support the extension program.

The 4-H program is an integral part of Cooperative Extension. In 1971 nearly 450 boys and girls are enrolled in 22 4-H clubs in Ford County. Their projects range from livestock, foods and clothing to photography, arts and crafts, conservation and model rocketry. Activities include camping, leadership experience, health, and recreation.

In addition to Home Economics Association support, the Ford County Cooperative Extension Service is provided local financial support by the Ford County Board of Supervisors.

HOSPITAL AUXILIARY

The Gibson Community Hospital Auxiliary was organized in November, 1952, with 238 members and Mrs. R. A. Stroh as the first president. The Auxiliary was organized for the purpose of promoting and advancing the welfare of the Gibson Community Hospital Association. This Auxiliary has grown to 262 members, including 35 life memberships and 37 associate memberships in 1971.

Since its organization, the Auxiliary has provided numerous volunteer services to the Gibson Community Hospital. Some of these services have included patient mail service, a library cart, sewing and mending, beauty shop, tray favors, bandage rolling, sponsoring the Red Cross Blood Mobile, refreshment stand and a candy strippers program.

In the past 19 years the Auxiliary's annual fund raising projects have raised over \$20,000. These funds have been instrumental in purchasing laboratory equipment, hospital beds and furniture, an incubator, air conditioners, oxygen equipment, a heart monitoring machine, and sponsoring an annual health careers scholarship.



One of the services provided to hospital patients by members of the Hospital Auxiliary is serving juice and cookies each afternoon. Faithful members for many years were Mrs. Marie Whallon (left) and Mrs. Emma Jensen.



OLD SWIMMING HOLE



GIBSON CITY SWIMMING POOL

Gibson City has been fortunate to have a swimming pool since the middle 1920's. In 1967 the original pool's deep end was filled to a shallower depth when a new diving pool was added. At the same time a wading pool for small children was built. Above Donna Verkler instructs a group of potential swimmers during Red Cross lessons. The diving pool is at top right and the wading pool is to the left.



Gibson City Athletic Club in 1892. Bottom row, from left, Art Grant, Sam Ward, Percy Morris, John Lindsey. Second row - Will Wilson, Ed Shaffer, Harry Spaulding, Frank Haupt, Dr. Chapman, Bryson Strauss. Top row - Will Slater, Rolla McClure, S. Palmer, Loyal Wright, Harry Worrell, Jas. Pierpont, Lon McClure.

ATHLETICS

Athletics have always been very important to Gibson City. One of the first was the Athletic Club which was located in what is now the Masonic Lodge. They had about twenty members. Their main event was boxing. They had several good boxers and brought in men from other towns and held boxing meets about twice a month. This was around the year 1890.

In the early days Gibson had a very good football team which played all of the larger towns in Central Illinois. They built up a very good reputation as one of the best teams.

Gibson has always been a great baseball center. They have had many great teams through the years. At one time the baseball games were played at the Fairgrounds which was west of the Canning Company. Then after Drummer High School was built baseball was played on the high school diamond. The last independent baseball team was around 1915. After baseball there was the softball league which played on a diamond south of the Nickle Plate depot. For several years there was a lot of interest in the league. They played two games a night, five nights a week during the summer time. Then after that they had a league for the different towns. Central Soya represented Gibson City and they had a great team. Now we have a new diamond east of the North Park with bleachers and a refreshment stand where small leaguers and the commercial leagues play nearly every night of the week under lights with very good crowds.

Then Gibson became basketball conscious and we had one of the best basketball courts in Central Illinois, the Hunt Coliseum. It was built for a roller skating rink and they really had several years of fine skating. People came from all over Central Illinois to skate here. Then the Yours Truly Basket Ball Club was formed named after the brand of pork and beans canned at the canning company. It was made up of home town boys. They played all the best teams in Illinois

and one year the Independent Basketball Tournament for the state championship was held here which the Yours Truly won and was state champion. There were teams from Chicago and all the states here. The Yours Truly played for a number of years until the new high school gymnasium was built and Hunts Coliseum was moved to south Sangamon Avenue and became a cheese factory.

Another thing Gibson had one winter in the Hunts Coliseum was wrestling matches. There was a man who moved to Gibson City and he was a big man in wrestling. We had several matches between him and some of the best wrestlers in the United States until we had the world championship middle weight wrestling match in Gibson City in which our man lost by one fall.

Then in the space of one year our swimming habits were changed from the old swimming hole in the Cordie Ogg's farm to the new swimming pool built across from the North Park. We thought it was certainly wonderful, a wading pool, swimming pool and a diving pool. At that time we thought it was the finest in the state but it has been brought up to date and you wouldn't know the old pool after seeing the new pool.

Back in the 1930's Gibson had a very good nine hole Golf Course on the McKeever farm west of Gibson City which brought several teams from other towns for meets. Gibson won their share of meets and a lot of persons spent several summers enjoying the golf course.

Gibson has always had a gun club through the years located in different places. Always before the holidays they had meets for game such as turkeys, geese, ducks and chickens. They had very good crowds. The meets would usually start about 10 in the morning and last nearly all day.

Gibson got its first bowling alley in the 1930's and there has been a bowling alley in some location every since - uptown at first. Now we have two real good bowling alleys. Both have league games every night during the week which gives a lot of people entertainment.



Champion Basketball Team of 1911 - 1912 of Drummer Township High School. Left to right - Franklin Barber, Owen Harry, Prof. B. L. Pilcher, Russell Richards, Herbert Bloom. Front - Herman Krudup.



Football Captain - Loyal Wright



YOURS TRULY BASKETBALL TEAM of 1913 - 14 thrilled audiences at the old Coliseum with their skill and fancy ball handling. The Gibson City Canning Company furnished the suits; seven all - wool ones cost \$100, and the second year each player received a matching sweater. Players pictured at top left to right - Hattie Ashby, "Doc" Shawl, Dr. Frank Hunt (coach), Franklin "Daddy" Barber, Dane Andersen; Second row - Ed "Bosco" Bonnen, Herbert "Kat" Bloom, Herman "Dutch" Krudup. Sitting in front - Wiley "Bud" Hunt.



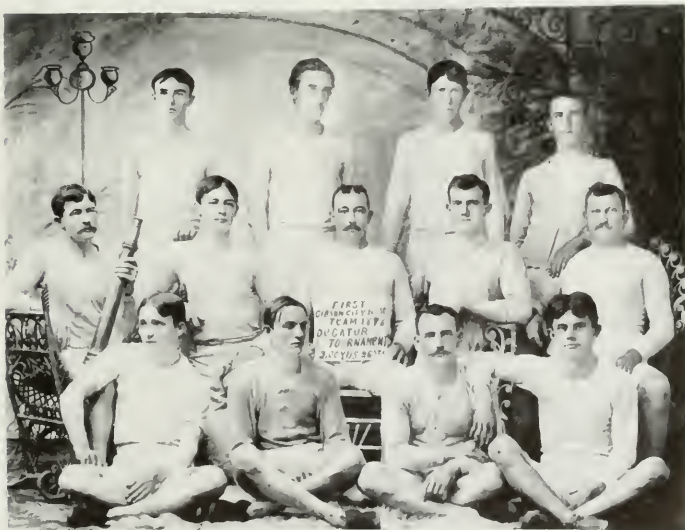
The Modern Woodmen Drill Team, Camp No. 235, had a very active group that traveled around Central Illinois performing in parades and for recreation. The commands of their drill master, Tim Bigger, could be heard for quite some distance, as he was a seasoned veteran of the Spanish American War and World War 1. Pictured in March 1916 are (top row from left) Tim Bigger, Drill Master; Lawrence Swanson, Simon Salmonson, Charles Hays, Harper Glenn, Harper Vernon, John S. Stevens. (Middle row) Hampton Bergstrom, Charles Chambers, Wayne Sawyer, (unidentified man), (Bottom row) William Brading, Roy Keitlinger, Walter Platt, Raymond (Teter) Phillips.



The Republican Glee Club of 1888 furnished beautiful music for many political and other events. Those identifiable are from left - Sam Preston, John Pierpont, and extreme right James Pierpont (twin brother of John.) Other members pictured are John Ewing, R. R. Baily (auctioneer), and Henry Preston.



Gibson City's Hook and Ladder Team were State Champions in 1900. From left top row - Ed Crodgy, J. H. Gregory, W. Thomas, Kirk Gregory, Loyal Wright, Albert Gilchrist, Frank Patton. Second row - Forest Eggleston, Wm. O'Neal, Hark Harry, Forrest Nagle, Ira Gilmore. Front row - Fred Jones, Chas. Kelso, Guy Haupt, Bert Ball.



FIREMEN TEAM

The Gibson City Hose Team, composed of volunteer firemen, each summer engaged in competitive sport with other city teams, to learn which team could throw the farthest stream of water in the least number of seconds. Members in 1898 were (top row, from left) Forrest Eggleston, Preston Wright, Wm. S. Day, Ott Poff; middle row, Jack McGarry, Wm. P. Thomas, Jack Stephens, Albert Gilchrist, and Ira Gilmore; bottom row, Oscar Beadels, Chas. Kelso, Wm. O'Neil and Guy Haupt.



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AND
EDUCATION

THE FIRST ASSEMBLY OF GOD CHURCH

Feeling the need of a Full Gospel Church in this city, a group of twelve persons met at the home of Willard Thomason in August, 1960, and held Sunday School classes and prayer meetings.

A few months later the group rented the former Pilgrim Holiness church building on West 9th St. where the Rev. J. C. Lewis was the first pastor.

In the year 1962 the Rev. Roger Boyd became the pastor, and the congregation purchased the Lutheran Church building and parsonage on the corner of 8th and Melvin Sts. in March 1964.

The Rev. Gary Royer came as minister of the church in 1968. He was followed by his father, the Rev. Elmer L. Royer in January, 1971, who is the present pastor.

The congregation is enjoying the many blessings of the Lord, and is averaging 43 in attendance.



GIBSON'S FIRST ASSEMBLY OF GOD

GIBSON CITY CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

The First Church of the Nazarene in Gibson City was organized March 17, 1963, by the Chicago Central District of the Church of the Nazarene. It was started as a home mission project under the direction of Rev. Marvin Cockman. A chapel-parsonage was constructed at the corner of Fourth and Guthrie where it is still located.

The pastors of the church have been: the Rev. Raymond Stockman (1963-66); the Rev. Harold Frye (1966-67); the Rev. Claude Diehl (1967-68); and the Rev. Kenneth Floyd (1968-69). The Rev. John Bouldrey, present pastor, is in his second year of the pastorate.

The church and its people extend a warm hand of Christian friendship to the community, welcoming anyone who visits the church.



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

The First Baptist Church, 628 South Church St., Gibson City, has not always had the name of First Baptist. The church was organized in 1950 as The Conservative Baptist Church, with Rev. Robert D. Oman of Chicago, Ill. as the first pastor. The first worship services were conducted in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Kermit Gosser, who are still members.

As the Conservative Baptist Group, the Wantwood School building was rented for worship services. Later in 1952 they purchased another school building for their worship services. After the purchase of this property in 1953, the church voted to petition the Southern Baptist Convention for affiliation. At this time they voted to change the name from the Conserved Baptist Church to the First Baptist Church.

In 1956 the lot at 628 S. Church St., upon which the church plant is now located, was purchased. The ground-breaking ceremony was conducted with the members present, and the first spade of earth turned over by Henry Forhn. This was the beginning of the building of the church which is presently The First Baptist Church, (affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention) of Gibson City.

The present pastor is Everett S. George.





THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

The first meeting place of this group was in the Canterbury School northeast of Gibson in 1869. From there they went to the loft of a building where John Moore had his wagon shop (1871).

The congregation was formally organized on Feb. 15, 1872, with 19 members, under the leadership of the Rev. G. W. Campbell. At that time it was called the Church of Christ.

The most prominent member in that early day was J. B. Lott, the founder of Gibson City. His wife, known as "aunt Maggie", was a faithful helper and donated the building site. The bricks for that building were donated by Andrew Jordan who made them in his brick yard. The church was erected at the southeast corner of Sangamon Ave. and 11th St.

To raise money to meet back obligations a poll tax of 75 cents per male member per month was levied in 1874. Also, a resolution was passed that a tax of one per cent of the actual value of the property of each and every member of the congregation be levied, sufficient to raise the balance of the money necessary to meet expenses. There is no record of how successful the venture was.

One of the church's prominent ministers was Rev. Steven Fisher, who resigned here to become pastor of University Place Church in Urbana, where he was very instrumental in establishing Illinois Disciples Foundation on campus in Urbana.

Another of their ministers went on to become the president of Eureka College. He was the Rev. Louis Lehman.

The Rev. R. M. Luedde was pastor for 27 years during which time, he taught in the public schools, became Vice President of Illinois State School Board Association, served as president of Ford Co. Sunday School Association, and for five years was president of the Illinois Christian Education Commission. He was well known throughout this area.

The old church building at Sangamon Ave. and 11th St. was torn down in March, 1971, shortly after the congregation moved to its beautiful, modern structure located on the northwest corner of Sangamon Avenue and 12th Street. Cost of the new edifice was \$225,000. The site of the church was given by Mr. and Mrs. Lawson Tjardes.

The first worship service was held in the new building Feb.

28, 1971, and was formally dedicated June 6, 1971. At the present time the minister is the Rev. Hugh A. Reynolds Jr.

The sanctuary seats 212 and the choir loft at the rear of the sanctuary seats 35. The fellowship hall can seat 125 at tables. The gally-type kitchen can be used for serving receptions, dinners and other occasions. Landscaping is to be completed in the near future.

Coder-Taylor Associates of Kenilworth were the architects. Robert Rasmussen, son of Mrs. Rose Ramussen and the late Harvey Rasmussen, was the project architect. Stoller & Maurer of Fairbury were general contractors.

The former church site was sold and Champaign Production Credit Association will build a new office at that location.

COMMUNITY CHRISTIAN CHURCH

On June 30, 1953, a group of 41 people met at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Ropp and voted to organize a new church, which was named Community Christian Church. The articles set forth in the very beginning were in keeping with the Disciples of Christ; to foster Christian love and Brotherhood, and to cooperate in all the Brotherhood Programs of the Disciples of Christ Church. There were 80 charter members.

On July 5th, 1953, the first Sunday School and worship services were held in the Edna Theatre. In December, 1953, the congregation met in the Legion Hall, until a suitable site could be obtained for a structure.

Lots were purchased for the present church on Route 54, at 12th. and Lawrence Streets for \$3000 from Ruth Ringland Rains. Estimated cost of the education department of the building was \$20,000 to \$25,000, with the members doing a great share of the work. The main sanctuary was to be constructed in future years.

Ground breaking ceremonies were held Sunday, May 16, 1954. On June 23, 1954, the corner-stone was laid. The first services were held in the new church on March 6th, 1955. The new building was dedicated Sunday, November 20, 1955.

The Rev. Dean McGrew has been the pastor since March 26, 1961.





United Brethren Church and Parsonage, Gibson City, Ill.

946 C. V. WILLIAMS, PHOTOGRAPHER, GIBSON CITY, ILL.



UNITED BRETHREN CHURCH

In the year 1875, the quarterly conference of the Elliott charge appointed a Board of Trustees, consisting of C. J. Buchner, J. C. Thornton, Peter Main, Sr., Rev. L. L. Rinehart and John Wagner, Esq., to take under advisement the feasibility of building a church house for the United Brethren in Christ in Gibson. In the following August began the erection of what was known as the Brethren Church in Gibson, and on the 8th day of January, 1876, it was finished and dedicated to the service of God. The building was 45 feet long, 30 feet wide and 18 feet ceiling. It had a belfry and a vestibule and cost \$1850.

During the year 1876 Rev. F. R. Mitchel was the pastor,

serving his second year on the charge. He organized a United Brethren society in Gibson City.

The United Brethren denomination and the Evangelical denomination united in 1946, hence the name was changed to The Evangelical United Brethren Church.

In July 1968, the United Brethren congregation merged with the First Methodist congregation, using the church facilities of the First Methodists.

The EUB church, which was demolished early in 1971, was dedicated in 1917. The Rev. George McClanathan was the pastor at the time of the dedication.



GIBSON CITY BIBLE CHURCH

The Gibson City Bible Church began as a result of evangelistic services conducted in a tent on the present site of the church in August of 1950. The tent services were sponsored by a ten member Inter-Community Laymen's Group.

This layman's group established a Sunday School which first met in the AME church on Eighth Street, under the direction of a ten member council.

Later in 1951 the first stages of the present building were completed at its present location on the southwest corner of Sixth and Melvin Streets. Reverend J. A. Heiser of Fisher was the first pastor. Members of the original church council were John Bruhl, Lewis Birky, Justus Detwiler, Earl Birkey, Carl Young, Lloyd Heiser, Orval Schrock, Dave Schiavo, Willard Heiser and Sam Zehr. A second work was established on the west side of Gibson City called the West Side Chapel, which has since been discontinued.

The church is currently under the direction of its third pastor, Rev. James Walsh. The church employs a youth director, Clyde Ingold, who is a lifetime resident of Fisher.

Presently 22 of the church's membership are serving in Christian Service. Of these, nine are serving as foreign missionaries, and six are either ministers or minister's wives, in the United States. Of the church's \$31,620 annual budget, more than half is designated for foreign missions.

Having a present membership of 239 members, the Bible Church is one of Gibson City's fastest growing churches.

AMERICAN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

In the year 1874 the Swedish population of Gibson City began to grow. As the population grew, the need for a Lutheran Church was seen. One was built at Eighth and Melvin Streets and was known as Salem Lutheran Church.

Salem Lutheran Church flourished for some time. The congregation was slow in shifting from the Swedish language to English and the membership began to dwindle. In 1934 the church was closed and the congregation dissolved. The building stood vacant for almost ten years.

In 1942 a considerable number of Lutherans had moved to Gibson City. An appeal was made to the American Lutheran

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

Jehovah's Witnesses established a congregation in Gibson City in June, 1967.

The local congregation is one of some 26,600 congregations in 206 countries world-wide.

Present attendance at the Gibson City Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses is 60-65 persons. They obtained their present building in 1967.

Jehovah's Witnesses, a Christian group of Bible students, base their beliefs and conduct on early Christianity as set forth in the Bible and in historical records from the early Christian era.

They have become well-known for the past 100 years the world over for their house-to-house preaching. In 1970, their combined efforts around the globe resulted in 267,581,120 hours spent sharing Bible truths at the homes of the public. They took time to conduct free weekly Bible studies in 1,146,378 homes of interested persons of the public around the world. There were 164,193 persons from all nations baptized as Jehovah's Witnesses last year.

Jehovah's Witnesses invite the public to attend their Bible study meetings at the local Kingdom Hall, 323 N. Lawrence.

Since the local congregation was formed David W. Ellison has served as presiding minister.



Church to investigate the possibility of establishing a congregation here. The Mission Board made a survey and found the field to be promising. A call was extended to the Reverend Werner Fritschel of Hebron, Nebraska where he had been teaching in the Hebron Junior College. He accepted the call and arrived in mid-summer 1942. The initial service was held July 26 in the old Salem Lutheran Church at 10:30 a.m.

By April, 1943, the congregation had grown to the size that it could be organized and on April 15, at 7:30 p.m. a meeting was held in the old Salem Lutheran Church for this purpose. The name American Evangelical Lutheran Church of Gibson City, Illinois was adopted and the congregation was duly

incorporated. The first officers were: Trustees: August Borchers, Bernard Scheiman and Alvin Timke; Deacons: Charles Riblet and Milton Frykman.

An attempt was made to acquire the properties of the old Salem Church. The Augustana Synod was very generous to us in that they offered us the church building and the lot it stood on for only \$1000.00. Later, when they learned that we would like to have the parsonage for the pastor's residence they gave it to us as an outright gift. We are deeply indebted to the Augustana Synod and thank them for their very real part in the growth of this congregation.

After being vacant for ten years both the church and house needed repair and improvement. One of the main improvements, dedicated January 16, 1944, was a new set of church windows. In 1949 the congregation became self supporting.

In 1964 during the pastorate of Rev. Carl Grabemann a new church was built east of town on Route No. 9. The dedication service was held Sunday, March 8, 1964. After Rev. Grabemann's death in 1966, Rev. O. H. Kreiter was called and is currently serving as pastor. A new parsonage was also built. The old church and parsonage were sold to the First Assembly of God.



OUR LADY OF LOURDES CATHOLIC CHURCH

The first date in connection with Catholicism in Gibson City is 1875. At this time Rev. John Fannin came from Fairbury, Ill., occasionally and said masses in the homes for the 12 members. These masses were said probably not oftener than monthly.

In 1884 Rev. John Kelly built the first Catholic Church in the south part of Gibson City, on lot 7 of Block 18, on the corner of Third (now Fifth) street and Church in Guthrie's Addition to Gibson City.

Records show that between 1882 and 1891 Franciscan Priests from Bloomington, Ill., served this parish—probably using the Lake Erie and Western Railroad as their mode of transportation.

On March 25, 1892, Thomas R. Wiley and wife Mae, sold to

RT. Rev. Jos. S. Spaulding, Bishop of Peoria Diocese, Lots 1 and 2 in Block 39, First Addition to Gibson City, Ill.

In December of 1891, Rev. Joseph P. Barry became the pastor and in the spring, following the purchase of the lots on N. Wood St., supervised the building of the first Rectory. (This building was recently replaced by the present Rectory.) Father Parry was in poor health, and because of this, his family paid to have the church moved from the Church Street location to Lot 2 of Block 39 North Wood St. At this time, Roberts, Melvin, and Farmer City were out-missions of Gibson City.

In 1910 Rev. J. T. FitzGerald became the pastor. He supervised the planning and the erection of the present Church. The corner stone of the new church was laid by Bishop Edmund Dunne of Peoria and the Sacrament of Confirmation was administered in 1913. The new church was opened to the public, for the first time on Sunday, February 22, 1914. It was not formally dedicated at that time as Bishop Dunne was in Europe. It was solemnly blessed by Very Rev. J. J. Shannon, Vicar General of the Peoria Diocese.

In May of 1917 Rev. John L. McMullen was appointed to the Gibson City and outmissions. In 1922 St. Rose Church, Strawn, was made an out-mission of Our Lady of Lourdes in addition to St. George, Melvin and Immaculate Conception, Roberts.

Some time between 1930 and December 1934 Roberts was transferred as a mission to Piper City and St. Joseph Church of Colfax was added to Our a Lady of Lourdes.

In 1959 Rev. William Kirk was appointed pastor of Gibson City and directed the building of the Religious Center in Gibson City. In 1963 he was transferred to Wheaton. While in Wheaton he was severely burned in a fire in his rectory and died. The Religious Center here then was named in his honor "The Father Kirk Memorial Center".

Rev. James Duffy came to Gibson City after Father Kirk's transfer to Wheaton.

Rev. Vytas Mememas replaced Rev. James Duffy in 1967. Under his direction the new rectory was built and the church renovated.

CHURCH OF CHRIST

In January, 1939 four families began meeting for worship at Guthrie Community Hall. This was the beginning of what was later to become the Gibson City Church.

A lot was purchased in Guthrie in June, 1949, and a building was moved onto this lot for a meeting house. The Brethern began to meet in this building for the first time in January, 1950.

In May, 1965, a new church building was constructed in Gibson City and in August, 1965, the congregation was moved from Guthrie and began meeting in the new meeting house.

The one acre of land on which the new church was erected was donated by Elmo Meiners of M & W Gear Co. The cost of the building was approximately \$45,000 and is located just south of town on Rt. 47. The sanctuary will seat 275. Additional seating for 75 is available in a balcony at the rear of the auditorium. There are 10 classrooms.

The present minister is Larry Darnall.

From the original four families which began meeting in Guthrie in January, 1939, our membership has grown to over 130.



ALEXANDER CHAPEL

The African Methodist Church was organized in Gibson City in 1877 by the Rev. Aaron Ward. Charter members were Mark and Melissa Anthony, Betty Manson, Ellen Smith and Mr. and Mrs. Allen Speckard.

Their first building was erected at a cost of \$600 and since that time there has been a congregation in town to accommodate those who wished to attend.

Negro citizens started the church when they came here from Burr Oaks where they worked for Michael Sullivant on his extensive farm holdings. Some chose to remain in this area after Sullivant lost much of his property and they came to Gibson City.

The church is now known as Alexander Chapel.



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THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A petition signed by 18 persons was presented to Bloomington Presbytery on Sept. 26th, asking for the organization of a Presbyterian Church at Gibson City. The petition was granted and on Oct. 28th, 1871, the same year in which the town was founded, the First Presbyterian Church of Gibson City was organized.

The first meeting place was the North Union School house four miles northwest of Gibson City. the organizing minister was the Rev. R. A. Criswell who was also the shepherd of the flock for the ensuing four years.

Among the 21 charter members were Mrs. Ruth E. Gilmore and Mrs. Sarah McKeever. These two names are still represented on the present membership list, there being several Gilmores and McKeeveres with other of their relatives now in the church in 1971.

As soon as Gibson took on the semblance of a town, the congregation came to where the people were, and held their services in Gilmore hall or in Guthrie Hall and on some occasions in the Illinois Central Depot, where the pews were planks and where the pulpit was a barrel. This latter place was often used by other denominational groups for their place of worship.

The first building was planned in 1874, but due to the hardships of the season it was not completed until 1875. The church cost \$3500. Money was tight and 18 percent interest had to be paid at the bank on that which was borrowed.

By the turn of the century the little Gothic style church was outgrown and in 1902 a new building, the present one, was erected on the sight of the old at Church and Eleventh Streets.

An organization within the Church that has lasted over 60 years is the Sunshine Class which has contributed to the finances, to the kitchen equipment, to the roll of teachers, and to the lasting memory of faithful participants.

In 1906 the Cumberland Presbyterian Church+ merged with this First Presbyterian and brought a sizeable influx of new members.

In 1950 a new kitchen was added to the big brick structure. In this centennial year a new Christian Education addition costing \$115,000 has been completed. The new addition was dedicated Sunday, April 25, 1971. The church will officially observe its Centennial year on Sunday, October 24, 1971. The present minister is Dr. Chester E. Chandler.

+The Cumberland Presbyterian Church, originally called the Hopewell Congregation was organized at Drummer Grove School one mile Northwest of Gibson City on Dec. 19, 1868 by the Rev. J. R. Lawrence.

Their building, completed in the fall of 1873, was one of the first churches in town. Their congregation was noted for being a dressy group, and their main leader was Ben McClure who was known to all the school children as Uncle Ben. Some of his descendants, along with the Knapps, the Hustons and the Jardines - (all related to charter members) are still members of this merged church today.

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The first meetings of the Methodist Episcopal Society were held in 1872 in the old Gault House, located where the Legion Hall now stands. Under the leadership of Rev. Job Ingram, arrangements were made to hold regular services in what was known as Gilmore Hall on Sangamon Avenue, and

meetings were held here until the church was built the following year, 1873, on the corner of Church and Tenth streets across the street south of where the present church stands. This church, facing north, was a frame building with two small rooms to the west, one for a vestibule and the other for Sunday School classes. The building had a belfry and was heated by two soft coal stoves. The total cost was \$2000.

Times were hard, money was scarce, and crops poor. During the building of the church, a group of women met in the belfry and organized a Mite Society, their object being to help raise money for the building of the church. The society afterwards became known as the Ladies Aid.

Rev. A. C. Byerly had succeeded Rev. Ingram in 1873 and was pastor in charge when the church was finished, serving for two years. During his first year pastorate, Mrs. Byerly organized the Women's Foreign Missionary Society.

In this early church there was a class meeting held at 10:30 a.m. followed by the worship service at 11 o'clock. The Sunday School was held at 3 p.m. The first Sunday School superintendent was Charles Wilson, and the first class leader was N. S. Garrell.

In 1882 the three lots where the present church and parsonage stand were purchased for \$900. The next year a parsonage was built at the site of the present one.

In 1888 the church building burned to the ground. Plans were immediately made for rebuilding. A frame structure was erected on the site of the present church. During this time, the Ladies Aid was actively engaged in raising funds to help defray expenses of the building. This second building was dedicated on October 28, 1888. Rev. Robert Stevens was pastor at the time. The cost of the building was \$4000.

In 1892, when Rev. W. T. Beadles was pastor, the old parsonage was sold for \$200 and a new one was built and dedicated on December 31, 1892, at a cost of \$2,195. On March 7, 1897, the church again caught fire and was badly damaged. It was remodeled with a basement and kitchen added. The Ladies Aid, Epworth League, and Junior League furnished it.

During these first 25 years, several revival meetings were held, increasing the membership on each occasion, culminating in the Great Union Revival in 1906 under the leadership of Billy Sunday, which resulted in more than 100 uniting with the Methodist Church.

In 1913, when it became necessary to make extensive repairs upon the church, it was decided that a new church should be built to replace the 1888 building. The cornerstone was laid in the late summer of 1913, and the present church was completed and dedicated on August 30, 1914, at a total cost of \$34,070. A brick parsonage was built in 1951.

In 1939, the Methodist Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church united with the M.E., the new organization assuming the name of simply the Methodist Church. The Ladies Aid and Women's Missionary Society became the Women's Society of Christian Service.

In 1966 extensive remodeling was undertaken in the present building at a cost of \$116,000.

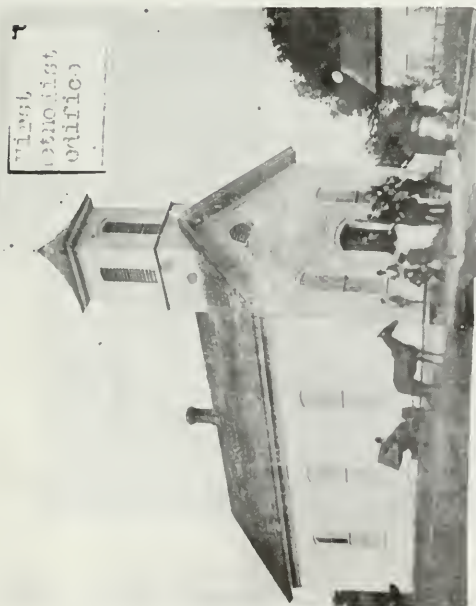
In 1968 the Evangelical United Brethren and Methodist Churches merged, becoming known as the United Methodist Church. The Elliott U.M. Church became a yoked parish with the Gibson Church when the former EUB and Lutheran churches of Elliott merged. The total membership of the yoked parish is 990.

The church is presently served by Rev. John R. Curtis, Jr., senior pastor, and Rev. David A. Eadie, associate, who also serves the Elliott church.



Methodist Episcopal Church and Parsonage, Gibson City, Ill.

1912



HISTORY OF SCHOOLS

(Editor's Note: The following article was prepared by Miss Evelyn Dueringer, a teacher and librarian in the high school for many years and now retired.)

The first school was established in the prairie days when the first settlers arrived between 1852 and 1860. Dr. J. E. Davis, who had settled on the prairie on what is now the John Foster farm, hired a private teacher in the fall of 1863 by the name of Miranda Holloway and invited his neighbor's children to his home for education with his own children in his home.

In 1865 in the northwest part of Drummer Township, Mr. Asa Centebury followed the same procedure as Dr. J. E. Davis and hired a teacher by the name of Miss Jennie Frew of Paxton to teach in his home, also inviting the neighbors' children to be taught there.

In 1866 the Drummer Grove district was organized, and a school house was built near Drummer Grove. It was on the south side of the road and on the west side of Drummer Creek northwest of the village of Gibson on the Dr. J. E. Davis farm. The first teacher was Mary Ann George. The children of the new village of Gibson had to go to this school. Some of those who walked from the village to the Drummer Grove School before there was a school in the village were Emma Gentle, Sara Gilmore, and Emma Houdyshell. Of these, the known descendants of Emma Gentle are the Mottier family, who resided northeast of Gibson City during the first half of the 20th century. Also, relatives of Sara Gilmore living in the Gibson City area are descendants of her uncle, Albert and

Craig Gilmore.

In 1872 this school was disbanded due to overcrowding from the increasing number of pupils from the growing village. The building was purchased by George Johnson, house mover. He moved it to Lot 9 on the west side of State Street and converted it into a residence for his family. It stood just opposite the west of the Jonathan B. Lott home. The old historic Drummer Grove schoolhouse still stands at 527 North State Street, occupied in the early half of this century by the David Craddick family, and presently occupied by Kenneth Eck and family.

In the fall of 1872 a new school district was organized, known as District No. 3, and school was taught in Union Hall, erected on the west side of Sangamon Avenue, north of the present Moyer Library, where the home of Mrs. Wm. M. Loy now stands. This was the first school in the village and was taught by Miss Caroline Williams, thus giving her credit for being the first teacher in the village of Gibson. The spring term of 1873 was taught by Mr. D. E. Stover, and the fall term of 1873 Mr. Jesse Hubbard was secured as the first superintendent of the school, as there were too many children for one teacher. Miss Ruby Sears was engaged as assistant.

In the summer of 1874 it was decided to build a new school building, as by this time the village of Gibson had become a boom town and Union Hall was not large enough to accommodate the numerous pupils. The directors were Charles Wilson, T. D. Spaulding, and F. S. Church. The contract was let to the lowest bidder, who was J. C. Mather of Kankakee, and work was started in July and finished in December at a



School children were housed in the building at the left and opened Friday, Dec. 1, 1874. The belfry was built on Christmas day by Fred Potts and George Wood, pioneers carpenters for \$15.

The bell is now in a place of honor at the entrance to the unit office. The building to the right was constructed in 1888. The entire school was destroyed by fire Jan. 10, 1912.

cost of \$10,000. Two new teachers were engaged. Miss Anna Pike and Miss Millie Sheffer.

There was a basement with two large furnaces with plenty of room for coal and kindling, two large playrooms. On the first floor were two large rooms seating 64 each room, these housing primary grades. Likewise, on second floor were two large rooms each seating 64 each, housing the intermediate and upper grades.

The school was built on Lots 4 and 5 in Block 31, First Addition to Gibson, on the west half of the block, the front entrance facing Melvin Street. The building was opened on Friday, December 4, 1874.

It had a large belfry built on Christmas Day by Fred Potts and George Wood, pioneer carpenters, for the sum of \$15. The belfry contained a very large, clear sounding bell that could be heard all over the town and for some distance out on the prairie in all directions. The janitor at the time of the opening of the building was L. L. Flora. He was well loved by the children. If the children were running to reach school on time when it came time to ring the bell, he was known to hold off on the "tardy bell" to allow them to enter their class on time.

A sidewalk built of planks completely surrounded the building. It was 12 feet wide and was built two feet off the ground, allowing a most wondrous playing space for the children on those days when the ground was muddy.

A small building was added at the same location in 1882 and a new addition to the original brick structure in 1888, so that the educational system at that time was located in one unit and valued at \$30,000.

On January 10, 1912, occurred a disastrous fire destroying

the entire unit. A new grade school building was completed at the same location in 1912 at a cost of \$50,000. Plans for a new high school building at the north end of town had been in progress since 1910, and that building (now the Junior High School) was dedicated Friday, October 27, 1911 at a cost of \$65,000.

Additional buildings have been added as needs arose. In 1971 Gibson City boasts a most up - to - date educational plant comparable with that of any town of similar size in the state with facilities to meet educational needs of every child.

The present Community Unit District No. 1 consists of the following:

Two elementary schools (Elliott and Gibson) Total enrollment 507.

One junior high (2 buildings) in Gibson City - Total Enrollment 432.

One high school (2 buildings) in Gibson City - Total enrollment 423.

Total enrollment - 1362.

Faculty of 80 including administrators.

The old bell used in the first school building was saved from the 1912 fire and kept in the new grade school where it lay idle for many years. It now stands in an honored place at the north door of the administrative building at 217 E. 17th St.

In the community is located a regional office of the Illinois Education Association, serving 10 surrounding counties.

Colleges serving the immediate area are Parkland Junior College in Champaign, University of Illinois in Champaign, Illinois State University at Normal, and Illinois Wesleyan University at Bloomington.



GIBSON CITY HIGH SCHOOL

By Bill Ogg, GCHS junior

The first high school in Gibson City met in the upper story of the grade school. Classes began in the fall of 1876, with the first class, of four members, graduating in 1880. The second class had eight members, and the class of '82 had only three members. The school was then called Gibson City High School. There are very few records available of the first high school.

In 1911, due to the grade school fire, it was necessary to build a new school. Separate buildings for the grade school and the high school were built. In that time our high school (the present Jr. High building) was considered an outstanding school in the state. Mr. Albert Poplett, who gave the school twenty-six years of service, helped to build the building.

With the new school, a new district was formed which took in the entire township. The school name became D.T.H.S. In the fall of 1911 the new high school opened its doors to 120 students. There were twenty members in the class of '12 the first class to graduate from the new high school.

At that time Baccalaureate was held in the Methodist Church. This was the first year that baccalaureate service was held. Commencement was held at the Chautauqua Pavilion in the North Park. Mrs. Ruth Loy remarked that the most unusual thing about the high school graduation was that the students had charge of the entire program. One of the highlights of graduation of 1923 was a trumpet solo by Ethel Bulger. (Mrs. Kumler, whom many of us had for a fourth grade teacher.) Another highlight was 'The Hatchet Oration.' This was given by a senior girl, dressed in an Indian costume. The oration was taken from Longfellow's "Hiawatha." At the end of the oration, she would present the torch to a representative from the junior class, who would give a short response, on behalf of the entire class. There was a great deal of feeling which went along with this tradition, which was discontinued in the latter 1920's.

The early drama's were held also at the Chautauqua Pavilion in the North Park. The Pavilion was protected from rains by doors all away around it. The only problem was if it rained several inches; then the pavilion started to flood.

In the fall of 1922 Mr. Loy came to Drummer. In that year he organized the first student council. He also organized and directed the first boy's glee club. Charter members who still reside in this area include Frank Hunt, Ezra Johnson, and Phillip Myers.

An interesting club of the early twenties was the Hiking Club. The 1923 "Drummer" says, "We have hiked to places like Drummer Grove, each time increasing the distance, and thereby testing our powers of endurance."

In 1923 the first orchestra was organized. It consisted, instrumentally, of violins, cornets, trombones, clarinets, and a piano. The first pianists include Gertrude and Verna Harder, and Lauretta Warfield (Kerchenfaut) all of whom became piano teachers in the area.

In 1923 a chapter of the National Honor Society was formed. This chapter was No. 187. This was an early chapter, as there are now thousands of chapters. The name was changed in 1956, from The Drummer Chapter to the Wm. M. Loy Chapter. Among the eight charter members still residing in the area are Evelyn Dueringer, and Francis Bryant.

It was interesting to note that in 1923, Onarga Military Academy wrote a letter to the football team congratulating them on their conduct on the field.

In 1923, Drummer won the Ford County Basketball tournament. The eight schools involved in the tournament were: Paxton, Melvin, Sibley, Roberts, Piper City, Kempton, Cabery and Drummer.

The trophy case, still in use in the main hall of the present junior high was dedicated in 1926 by that year's senior class.

The debating team of 1928 made a clean sweep to the district finals winning every debate until the finals.

The gymnasium was added in 1929. That years class was the first to have their promotional exercises in the new gym. Plays could also be held in it.

The dance of the twenties was the Charleston. There were expressions such as "Oh you kid" and "Twenty three skidoo."

In 1931 the Wauseca Trophy was presented to the basketball team. They had a season of no losses.

The Future Farmers of America Chapter was organized in 1931 to create a greater interest in agriculture. The Home Economics Club began in 1933. This was reorganized to form the Future Homemakers of America chapter around 1947.

When, in 1932, Miss Green (Mrs. DeWall) was hired as commercial teacher many of the board members thought she was too good looking to hire.

In 1930 the orchestra was disbanded and a band was formed. The 1937 yearbook states 'our band is one of the highest rated in the state, winning the district contest for six consecutive years and the national contest for three consecutive years.'

The band attended the national contest in 1933 in Evanston, receiving a second. The contest also enjoyed a day at the Chicago World's Fair. In 1934, due to a shortage of funds, the band was unable to travel to Des Moines, Iowa, for the national contest, but in 1936 they traveled to Cleveland, Ohio, bringing home a "first". In 1940 the band was selected to attend Battle Creek, Michigan, where they earned a 'first' rating. The band was under the direction, during these years of Mr. Byron Wyman, now residing in Champaign.

In the fall of 1935 the first football game of the season was postponed because of a scarlet fever outbreak. The football team of 1938 was undefeated. The team of '39 had an undefeated record until the last game of the season when Paxton beat Drummer 3 - 0.

Until 1936 there was no full time secretary. For a few years before this Pauline Goodrich (Hudson) and Doris Summers (Tjardes) served as part time secretaries. Verna Spry (Buck) was hired in 1936 as the first full time secretary.

The thirties found teenagers dancing to the 'Big Apple', and the Lambeth Walk, while the forties brought the 'Jitterbug'.

It was in 1939 that the shops building was completed. With its completion came a new course: Building Trades. The class under the direction of Mr. Fred Anderson, and Mr. Harold Fildes, built eight houses between the years 1939 and 1956. It was that year that the course was discontinued. Three years later the D. O. program was introduced.

In 1940 Miss Thomassen began the first Discussion Groups. These were held for freshman, on Wednesday 8th hour.

The first annual "Messiah" was presented by people in the community along with the high school chorus on Dec. 17, 1944.

It was in 1944 when Baccalaureate services were first held at the high school instead of the Methodist Church.

In 1945 the basketball team won the county tournament.

In 1945 students had a magazine campaign, raising enough money to purchase a nickelodeon and records, to be used for dances.

The fall of 1954 found students entering a new high school. The dedication ceremony was held in the fall of the year, with Gov. Stratton as guest speaker.

It was in 1956 that Mr. Page became the district superin-

tendent. In 1960 Mr. Trotter replaced Mr. A. J. McKinney as principal.

Quill and Scroll, the honorary organization for the journalists, was reinstated after an absence of thirty five years.

In 1957 the Future Nurses of America were organized to aid high school students prepare for and select a career in nursing.

The Future Teachers of America were also organized in 1957. Mr. Page was the founder of the club, which was named in honor of Miss Thomassen.

In 1963 the Jr. Varsity Football team showed great promise. The varsity team won two out of nine games while the JV's lost only two out of seven games.

Wrestling, which was first introduced for a few years, in

the early thirties, was organized again in 1966.

In 1966 Mr. Clarence Poppett retired after thirty years as janitor. A car was presented to him for his years of service.

In 1968 the Basketball team advanced to the sectional tournament. This was the farthest our school's team had ever gone.

In 1969 the Band and Chorus won the Sweepstakes Award at the State Contest.

The Boy's Glee Club was organized in 1970, after an absence of six years.

The Spring of 1971 brought about the resignation of Miss Thomassen after forty years of service, in which she missed only one day. When asked what type of a gift she would like most she very unselfishly requested that the money be placed in the Student Loan Fund, of the F.T.A.



High School



Decorations for the Corn Carnival for the J. L. Saxton and J. H. White stores were designed by L. C. Wright. Picture was dated Oct. 2, 1903. The solid body of this decoration was made of one - half inch boards painted in light blue with cold water paint with corn, oats, corn shucks, stalks and materials suitable for a cereal decoration. The upper grill work was made of kaffir corn stalks. The upper border was made of small bunches of oats.



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REMINISCENCES



CORN CARNIVALS

The Corn Carnivals in Gibson City were a unique festival, very unlike the carnival companies of a later date.

Begun in the early 1900's, they were an annual October event until the Chautauqua craze hit the scene. Each year in the early spring, a committee was named and headed by Hi Arrowsmith and John Swanson, who journeyed to Chicago and engaged free acts for the following October.

Platforms were erected in each block of Sangamon Avenue for free entertainment such as aerials, bicycles, high dives, etc. A big band from Bloomington or Decatur was hired and played for the whole week. No carnival companies, as such, were permitted. Concessions, however, were allowed such as

merry-go-rounds, ferris wheels, and some side shows.

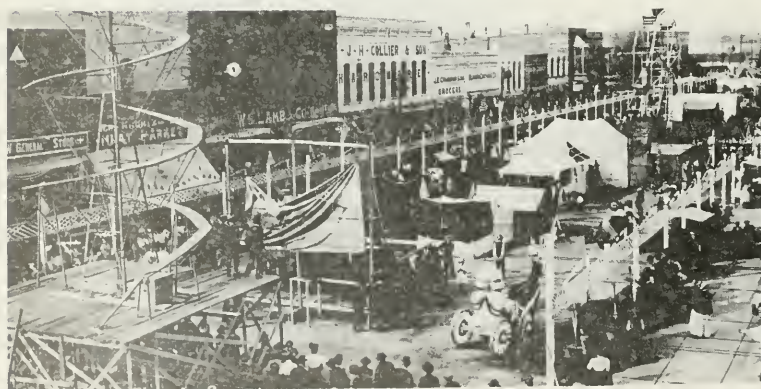
School was let out and the entire population of Gibson City celebrated Corn Carnival Week.

One of the highlights was a huge parade which featured bands and decorated floats, pony carts, buggies, etc. - many used real flowers for the elaborate decorations.

The entire business district was decorated using corn stalks and many other grains for designs.

The climax of the week was a ball at Burwell Opera House, (now the Masonic Lodge) on Saturday night attended by young and old alike - all dancing to a good orchestra.





THE GIBSON HOME CHAUTAUQUA ASSOCIATION

The Gibson Home Chautauqua Association was formed on March 13, 1916. Interested citizens held a meeting in the old Masonic Hall, which was above what is now Loys Stores.

C. J. Robertson was elected the first president. Other officers were John Hollis, vice - president; Miss Chloe Rady, secretary; and John McClure, treasurer.

The Chautauqua entertainment was scheduled for July 20 - 25. Talent cost \$925 and admission was 25 cents.

The most famous person to present a program was the great orator William Jennings Bryan, who spoke on Monday, July 24.

The association ended the season with \$13.78, and on August 4, a permanent Chautauqua organization, known as the Gibson City Chautauqua Association, was incorporated under state laws.

Besides providing top entertainment for the residents, the association built a \$10,000 pavilion in Mellinger Park, commonly known as the North Park.



BILLY SUNDAY

The Rev. William A. Sunday, the most celebrated evangelist and revivalist of the late 1800's, appeared in Gibson during June and July of 1907.

He preached here for seven weeks, day and night, to crowds that packed a huge tabernacle built specifically for the purpose. The tabernacle was located at the corner of 6th St. and Sangamon Ave.

A group of local business leaders, also leaders in their own churches, persuaded Sunday to come to Gibson City. Members of that group included Dr. W. A. Hoover, Dr. C. W. Knapp, and Percy Lowry.

BILLY GRAHAM CRUSADE HERE IN JULY, 1966

The Gibson City High School athletic field was the scene for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Crusade held July 17 - 31, 1966.

Many months of detailed planning (started in Dec., 1965) went into this great Crusade which drew people from all over

East Central Illinois. It was officially advertised as the East Central Illinois Billy Graham Crusade.

During the two weeks, thousands went forward to dedicate or re-dedicate their lives to Jesus Christ.

The crusade received its Certificate of Incorporation papers on Dec. 7, 1965. Named as board of directors in the articles of incorporation were Ellis Unzicker, general chairman of the successful religious event; the Rev. Jack Kaley then minister of the former Evangelical United Brethren Church; the Rev. Lester Ringham of the First Christian Church; Mrs. Thomas (Valeria) Hunt, secretary; John E. Wilson, Piper City, treasurer; Frank Hubert, Saybrook; and Mrs. Gladys Gottschalk, Anchor.

Others serving on the executive committee as chairmen from this area were the Rev. James Pollard of the Gibson City Bible Church; Clifford Shaner; Warren Page, the Rev. Roger Boyd, Mrs. Ron Hayse of Elliott, L. F. Swanson, Dwight (Dike) Eddleman and the Rev. Leo Ewing of the Methodist Church. Mrs. Jon (Jean) Hunt served as office secretary.

Dr. John Wesley White was the evangelist during the two weeks. His dynamic sermons led many to respond to his call.

The crusade here was organized to include 33 area towns and villages, covering a population of approximately 47,000 people.

A choir of over 200 voices sang nightly. The final night of the crusade featured nationally known gospel singer George Beverly Shea. One of the largest crowds in the city's history gathered at the football field that night. Cars were parked everywhere, all the chairs were filled and some brought their own folding chairs and blankets.

The crusade drew wide publicity and is still considered by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association as one of its greatest successes. Crusades sponsored by the BGEA rarely plan such events in small towns.

COLISEUM

The Coliseum in Gibson City was built about 1907 by Martin Roslyn and Dr. Frank Hunt, Sr. In essence it was the home of the "Yours Truly Basketball Team", a professional home town team that toured, met and conquered teams all over the state, even playing the Harlem Globetrotters of that day.

The Coliseum was the palace for the roller skaters in the day when roller skating rivalled local dancing events.

So enthusiastic were the patrons of the "Yours Truly Team" that one father and mother brought their youngest, placed him under the seats which surrounded the playing field to sleep. After the excitement of the game, the parents returned home only to discover that they had left the infant under the seat, locked in the Coliseum.



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Sunday Afternoons, 3 O'clock

TOPICS

Nov. 23. "Christ's Second Coming,
Why? How? When?"

LECTURER

Nov. 30 "Victory O'er The Grave"

PASTOR

Dec. 7 "The Two Salvations"

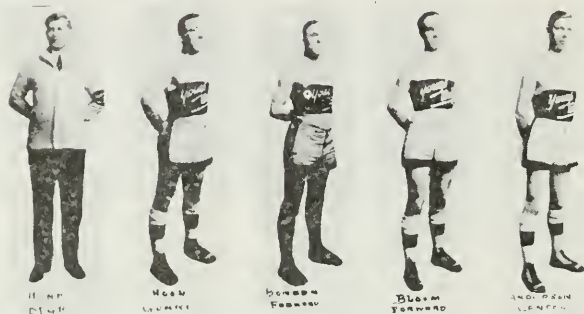
PASTOR

YOURSELF AND FRIENDS ARE cordially INVITED

ALL SEATS FREE



NO COLLECTION



Taking part in the Corn Carnival parade held in October 1909 were (from left) Stanley Means, Frank Hunt Jr., William C. Bryant, Gretchen Wilkinson Potts, Fred McClure and Alyce Hunt Preston.

FAIR ASSOCIATION ORGANIZED IN 1872

In less than two years after the first business was established in the village, the citizens could boast of a fair. The Fair Association was organized in 1872 and the first fair was held in September of that year.

J. B. Lott set aside 30 acres in the northwest part of the town site, which was incorporated in the spring of that year for the fair grounds. The association elected Dr. J. E. Davis as president; W. H. Simms, secretary; and John H. Collier, treasurer.

A roofless amphitheater was constructed along the west side of the grounds and a band stand was built near the south end of the race track. A floral hall located at the north side of the field held exhibits.

There was no well at the fair grounds, so water had to be hauled in on barrels. Plenty of tin cups were on hand for use by the thirsty public.

On the first day of the fair held in 1875, after boring to a depth of 28 feet, a small stream of water burst forth at the surface which was of excellent quality, pure and cold. It was the first artesian well in this locality and continued to flow for many years. From that time on, a drink at this well was a great attraction at the fair.

The fairs continued with much success for eight years with people coming from miles around to attend. The fair grounds were the scene of many races, Fourth of July celebrations and other events.

The last fair was held in September 1879; the month and year that one of its chief sponsors, J. B. Lott, died.

Another race track was laid out on the farm of C. C. Pearce just east of the village in the early 1880s. Mr. Pearce had some race horses, as did Henry Friday of Anchor and Dr. J. W. Dickey and several others in the area. Many lively races took place at that track.

A popular summer recreation was picnicking. There were no shade trees in the village. One traveler remarked, "The only shade here is a sunflower!" Not true -- as many young trees were planted those first years, but needed time to grow.

There were very few buggies or carriages in the village before 1880, so transportation to the groves was by horse and wagon. The closest to the village was Drummer Grove, a favorite place for young and old, and was within walking distance, if necessary. There were other groves farther away where some groups did go. Hayracks loaded with young people who did not mind the distance. Bicycles came into the town before too many years -- streets and roads were none too good for such riding -- but, who cared about that.

Bicycle races also were held at the race tracks.

BUCKET BRIGADE WAS EARLY FIRE DEFENSE

In the early days the only means of fighting a fire in the village was by the "bucket brigade." When a fire was discovered, the call of "fire, fire, fire," aroused every one.

Young Dr. Ragsdale usually raced to the livery stable for his horse and rode through the streets giving the alarm, which brought out able-bodied citizens to help fight the fire.

Buckets were filled at the "pump wells" nearest to the blaze and passed hand to hand to be thrown on to the burning building. H. H. Ward had been a Chicago fireman before coming to Gibson and always took charge of directing the bucket lines and fighting the fires until the first Volunteer Fire Department was organized. They had no equipment of any kind for many years.

The first fire engine had a rail along the side and two men

would stand up on the side and pump the suction pump after the hose or "suction" was dropped into a cistern well or tank of water and "work" the pump to force a stream of water up through the hose. "Sometimes the men had to run and pull the hose cart by hand."

In 1895 the city laid water mains and erected a pumping station on north Melvin street.

A 660-foot high tower was built of brick with a steel tank on top which held 50,000 gallons of water. A ground reservoir held an equal amount and both were kept filled with water pumped from bored wells pumped by a turbine engine.

A volunteer fire department was organized with A. B. Siverling as the fire chief. Hose carts were added and a new fire engine purchased by the town with a team of beautiful black horses to pull the equipment. The hose carts were pulled by dray wagons or any conveyance that was handy.

(Note: No dates can be authenticated on the above information.)

There was no fire alarm until 1892 when S. J. LeFevre built the first electric light plant, and placed a siren on the steam boiler. When a fire occurred, the plant would be notified and the citizens would hear long, hair-raising blasts of the whistle, one for the first ward, two for ward two, three for the third ward, letting the population and the firemen know where the fire was located.

When the city hall was built in 1906, the historic bell from the Cumberland Presbyterian Church was purchased by the city and hung in the tower of the city hall. This bell was used as the fire alarm until fire destroyed the city hall in 1937.

When the new city hall was built, an electric siren was placed on the tower and was operated by a switch from the telephone office.

In 1895 the city provided the firemen with uniforms. On November 29 of that year they staged the first Fireman's Ball in Burwell's Opera House. There was a very large attendance. These affairs have continued in various places since that time.

After the city purchased a hook and ladder wagon the local firemen won the State Championship for three consecutive years, at Clinton, Blue Island and LaSalle. In 1900 they received a Silver Trumpet. Some of the members at that time were: Al Hawkins (?), Fred Jones, Charles Kelso, A. Haupt, Bert Ball, Forrest Eggleston, Ira Gilmore, Ed Crowdy, Jay Gregory, "Pet" Thomas, Kirk Gregory, Loyal Wright, Albert Gilchrist and Frank Patton.

FIRES DESTROY MANY BUSINESSES IN 1800'S

With no fire protection equipment in the early years of Gibson City, many fires raged out of hand and were fought only by willing hands manning bucket brigades as they struggled to save property.

Headlines in the Gibson City Courier said damages in the earliest major fire in downtown Gibson amounted to \$32,000. An account of the fire which occurred on the west side of Sangamon Avenue (100 block) on Tuesday, January 30, 1883 follows:

The most destructive fire in the history of Gibson was on Tuesday morning, which at one time threatened to sweep away the whole town. A little after 2 a.m. the large frame building known as the Burwell building was discovered to be



In Mrs. Mary Grim Pate's history of Gibson City is the following notation from her mother's diary: "Tuesday night, Feb. 4th, 1913. A very cold day. A big fire in town about 3 o'clock this a.m. burned the Wade Store, Cady Drug Store, Poff Bros. Store and the American Express office."

on fire by the night watchman, Peter Bowen. Knowing that the second floor was occupied by several roomers, he hastened to awaken them but discovered that they had been alerted and were fleeing for their lives; the fire having in such a short time, filled the upstairs with dense and suffocating smoke. Nothing was saved by these people.

The immense stock of clothing of the C. F. Baker store and the grocery stock of C. F. Buckman and Co. below were a total loss, as well as the J. H. Collier store next door to the north. A vacant lot, then the J. E. Crammond brick building to the north stopped the flames after hundreds of willing hands formed bucket brigades and poured water on the roofs and sides of surrounding buildings which were all of wood construction with coal houses and cribs in the rear.

Had the other buildings caught fire nothing would have prevented the fire from burning clear to the Illinois Central depot. The danger was so threatening that these buildings were emptied of their contents into the street.

The buildings to the south of the Burwell building caught fire and burned. These were two - story and the occupants had time to get some of their effects out. Mr. Robertson's furniture store and Goff Photograph were in these buildings.

A barrel of gun powder in the J. H. Collier hardware store exploded throwing charred boards as far as the Wabash depot.

The citizens worked with heroic efforts to check the flames and save property. Water was carried in buckets as fast as it could be pumped from the well in the neighborhood.

Mr. Crammond gathered up what he could of his stock that was carried out of his building and opened up the next day under the Union Hall.

There was much looting, by persons not seeming to care

about the loss and suffering of their neighbors. One man was seen to pick out a coat for himself and a shawl for his wife! Another person was seen to fill his pockets with small but valuable articles from the New York Store, then strike out for home.

Matt Waples, a furniture dealer, and undertaker who made many coffins, found one of his, carefully hidden away under J. W. Saxton's sidewalks, with three pair of pants from the New York store stuffed in it. Some fellow was evidently preparing for his journey to the next world. He was considerate, however, as he had picked out a cheap coffin.

Mr. Burwell and Mr. Collier immediately started to rebuild their buildings and the walls were about ready for the roofs when a violent wind storm hit the village at 10 o'clock, July 13, 1883. The wind raged for nearly an hour. The upper joists and siding were blown down, breaking some of the lower ones.

The damage from this storm was repaired and these buildings were ready for occupancy by mid - December.

The Second Major Fire

August 22, 1885

The second major fire in the history of Gibson was on Saturday night, August 22, 1885, just a little over two years after the destructive fire of 1883. Both of them between 8th and 9th streets but on opposite sides of the street. This one was on the east side of Sangamon Avenue.

This second fire was at the North end of the block and consumed five buildings with a loss of \$8000. The fire had started in the floor of J. D. Hannugans Cigar Store and spread rapidly.

J. H. White's Grocery Store to the south was consumed. The small wooden building used as a barber shop by Mark Anthony was torn down to stop the fire, as was the Harper

building. The brick building housing the Mallinson and Wilson Bank was also destroyed.

The town pump across the street from the bank and the wells at the yards of the homes on Church street furnished water for the bucket brigades that helped to finally halt the flames before the whole block burned.

The Third Major Fire

April 15, 1890

The third major fire in the early days of Gibson was again on the east side of Sangamon Ave. in the block between eighth and ninth streets.

It started at night in the restaurant of H. P. and William Arrowsmith, who slept in the back room of the building. Hearing the roar of the flames, they escaped and gave the alarm.

Dr. W. W. Ragsdale, a young physician in the village, saw the fire, rushed to the livery stable for his horse, and rode over the town, crying "Fire, Fire, Fire" and aroused the town.

This was the customary means of arousing the people especially at night.

Horace N. Ward who had been a Chicago fireman for some time and had served during the Chicago fire, always ran to our fires and took charge directing the bucket lines and fighting the fires.

Six buildings were burned and the windows in the Lamb's Furniture Store across the street fell out.

None of the original buildings on the east side of Sangamon Avenue were left standing after this fire.

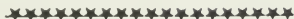
OUTSTANDING CITIZEN AWARD

The Chamber of Commerce in 1962 initiated an award to be presented each year to a citizen or organization in recognition for their work towards the betterment of the city and for community service.

The winner of the award is chosen from nominations submitted by citizens to an anonymous committee, who selects the "Outstanding Citizen." The recipient is kept a secret and announced at the annual dinner meeting of the chamber in February each year.

The following people have been named Gibson City's "Outstanding Citizen":

Verle Kramer, 1962, who died in November, 1968; Mrs. Loel (Margaret) Helmick, 1963, who died in June, 1970; Frank Hunt Jr., 1964; Orren Pierce, 1965; the Rev. Jack Kaley, 1966; Mrs. W. T. (Helen) Francis, 1967; Dr. E. C. Bucher, 1968; Gibson City Volunteer Fire Department, 1969; and Ernest Brown, 1970.



Children's parade of the 1908 Corn Carnival included the following youngsters: (from left) Fred McClure, unidentified, Alyce Hunt Preston, Harold Kemple, Marjorie Kemple, Mary Frances Culter Stubbart, Anita Palmer Houran, Percy Wood, Clarence Barrow, Holden White and Pete Palmer.

OLDEST DWELLING

The first dwelling in the village of Gibson was built by William Moyer, a grain merchant. It was constructed near the railroad track west of the Illinois Central depot, according to Mary Grim Pate's history of Gibson City.

The house was considered to be "very fine" for those days but Mr. Moyer decided to build a large one farther from the railroad. His first house was moved to the east side of the street in Block 12, Original Town, now known as Church street, just south of the Dungan and LeFevre houses. It was later torn down.

"In June 1873 Mr. Moyer erected a one - and - a - half story cottage on the corner lot of what is now 10th and North Wood Streets. Now, in 1940, when this history is being written, it seems to be in as good condition as when it was built, but has been moved to the south side of the lot and faces to the west.

The present address is 218 N. Wood St.

The house has been owned by a number of people. Mr. and Mrs. Caleb McKeever lived there during the late 1890's and early 1900's until they passed away. The house was also owned by the Joseph Ehresmans, who at one time rented it to the Harvey Rasmussen family. After Dr. Potts purchased the property, the Rasmussens lived there for a while, until it was made into his office.

H. L. Gregory, a pioneer merchant, built a pretentious house on the corner lot and many social functions were held there in the early days. The Knapp family owned it and also the Barber family. A fire completely destroyed the structure and in the early 1930's the late Dr. A. L. Potts purchased the property and erected a modern brick home. He used the former Moyer house as his office for a time and after he moved his office to 214 N. Sangamon Ave. in downtown Gibson City, the house was rented. Former Postmaster



Hazen L. (Ziggy) Ernst rented the house for some years. In 1951 Dr. Potts' daughter and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Alan Broadus, moved into the home. The house was sold in 1970 to Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Jones when the Broadus family purchased the former Potts' residence on the corner.

The Moyer house originally had 10 - foot ceilings and the structure has been enlarged through the years.

Over the years, additions have been made to the original structure -- which featured 10 - foot high ceilings. The house now has a living room, dining room, kitchen, three small bedrooms and a bath downstairs.



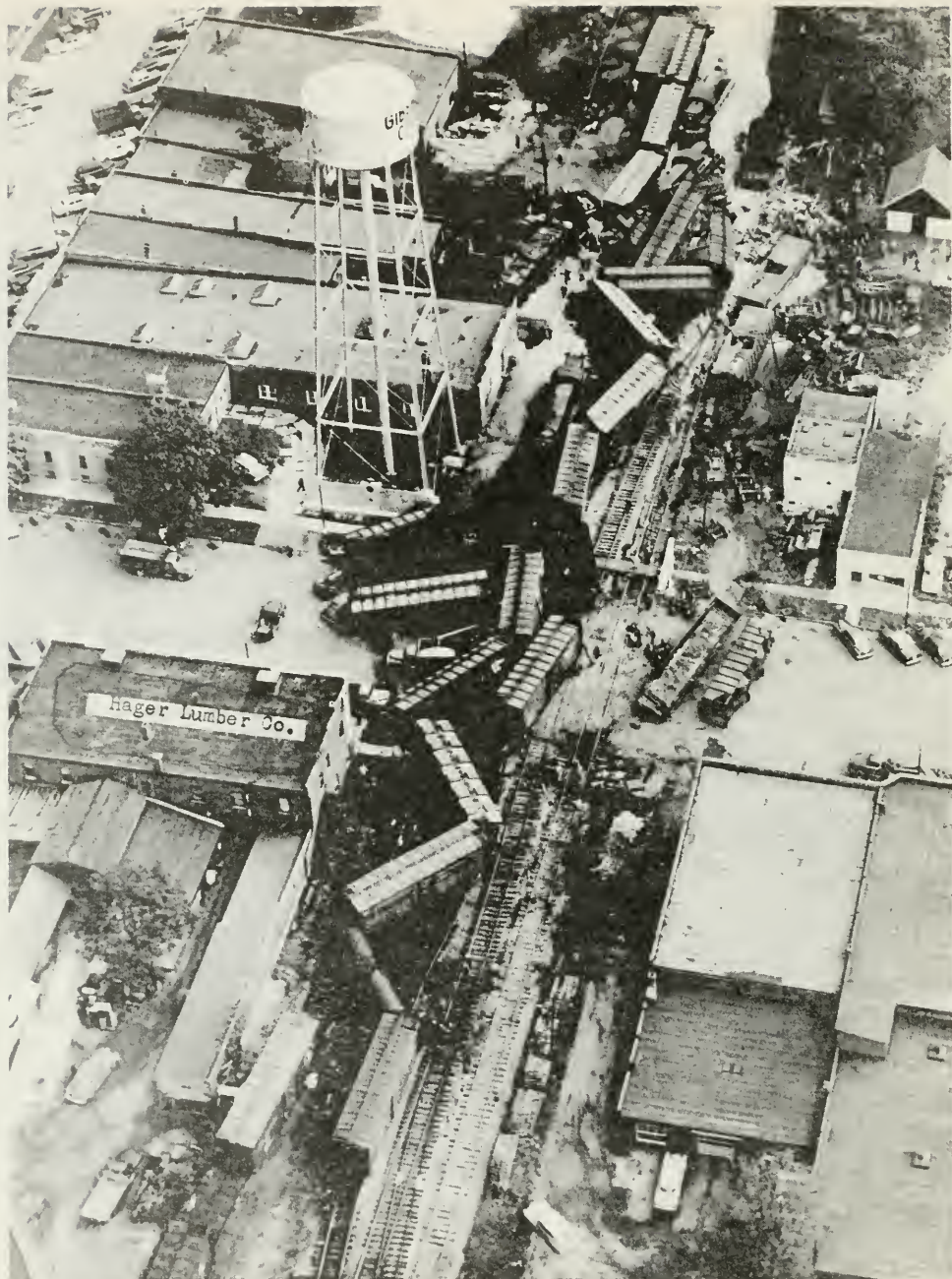
Gibson City helped the state of Illinois celebrate its Sesquicentennial year in 1968 with a huge parade. One of the features was the Mohammed Shrine band from Peoria, which was scheduled to return to Gibson City for the Centennial celebration parade in 1971. Another marching band in the "Sesqui" parade was the Great Lakes Naval Training Station band.



Pens of livestock were plentiful in the early days of the annual Community Sale. Thousands of people from area towns and neighboring states come to buy bargains in used farm equipment. The sale has continued for 36 years. It is always held the first Thursday in March.



Old-fashioned Halloween parade was an annual event each year. Young and old turned out for the parade.



Gibson City has been the scene of many railroad accidents down through the years, but probably the most spectacular occurred at 10 minutes to midnight on Thursday night, Oct. 11, 1951. The Nickel Plate Railroad's "Whiskey Pete", eastbound from Peoria, roared through an open switch and piled up in a huge tangle of cars which spilled hogs and wheat down the block from Sangamon Avenue to Church Street. Miraculously, there were no injuries, even though the two

locomotives were in the biggest stack of cars, and very little property damage to Gibson City. However, the railroad termed it a "million dollar accident", and it required nearly a week to clear the wreckage and open the tracks to rail traffic. Oldtimers recalled that the train earned the nickname "Whiskey Pete" in the days when it hauled large quantities of liquor eastward from Peoria, passing through Gibson City at around midnight.

T R A N S P O R T A T I O N



PLATS AND
MAPS

RAILS

Traveling on horseback or walking, the first settlers to come to the Gibson City area found swamps and a vast sea of prairie grass, higher than a horse's back. Trails made by Indian hunting parties, along with wagon trails were the only roads. Horses and wagons hauled the farm produce to distant markets and brought back supplies and materials to build the early houses.

The coming of the railroads opened up the country for settlement, agricultural and industrial development. By 1874 Gibson City was the intersection of three railroads.

Jonathon B. Lott, a man who made things happen, secured a station on his property of the Gilman, Clinton, and Springfield Rail Road, built in 1871. In 1876 the Illinois Central system acquired this section of railroad and it became a portion of their main line from Chicago to St. Louis. J. E. Miller was the first agent and the depot was built up high on poles to keep out of the water.

Never underestimate the help of friends! Jonathon Lott's next move was to get the LaFayette, Bloomington and Mississippi Railroad to come through Gibson City. Jonathon B. Cheney and Haines Cheney of Bloomington helped secure the right of way. Joseph Fifer, later governor of Illinois, helped his Civil War comrade, Mr. Lott, bring this line through Gibson City instead of three miles south as originally surveyed. The first regular train service began in the spring of 1872 on this line, now known as the Peoria branch of the Norfolk and Western.

The Chicago and Paducah Railroad could easily have passed west of Gibson City, but witnesses say it was surveyed on Saturday night and Sunday, coming right through Spring Street of Gibson City to avoid the question of right of way. Completed in 1874 with F. E. Williamson as first agent, this railway is now known as the Decatur branch of the Norfolk and Western.

These same three railroads still serve Gibson City by transporting much freight each year. Mayor Don Craig, agent of the Norfolk and Western, reports that business has increased considerably since the merger of the former Wabash and Nickel Plate lines. The Illinois Central Railroad, in charge of agent Charles W. Nelson, handles a great deal of freight, linking Gibson City with Chicago and St. Louis.

Passenger service for both local railways was terminated May 1 with the beginning of Amtrak. The interlocking tower, maintained 24 hours per day, controls the train traffic through Gibson City. Approximately 680 trains pass through our city each month.



IC HAND CAR

W. M. Case, Bart Wright, Jim Blades and Roy Nazaris



Railway passenger service to and from Gibson City came to an end after 100 years with the beginning of Amtrak May 1, 1971. One of the last passenger trains leaves Gibson City via the Illinois Central Railroad. IC employees pictured are (from left Dan Sapp, assistant trainmaster; Mrs. Bud O'Neal, clerk; and Charles Nelson, agent.



Engine No. 83, sporting two steam domes, is a typical wood burner seen in the early days of railroading. The railroad depot was the scene of much activity in the early years of Gibson City, as citizens relied on passenger service to get from one town to another, as well as to haul freight.

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ROADS

In the early days of Gibson City, horse - drawn lumber wagons, buggies, two - wheel carts and spring wagons hauled supplies and persons along the often dusty or muddy streets of the town and surrounding rural area. A well - trained riding or driving team was a most valued possession. Dr. Davis had the first buggy in 1875. George Traylor had one of the first "democrats" (a spring wagon with two seats) and rented it to young men such as Alf Barrow and Will Reader in the Scotland School area for a \$1.00 a night; Mrs. W. C. Mottier, his daughter, remembers her mother felt this was an extravagant purchase, when "we had a perfectly good lumber wagon to go in!"

Later came the carriage, the rubber tired buggy, the bobsleds and cutters, and the pheaton. D. M. Dixon and George Haupt opened early harness shops by 1874. Peter Polson, an early blacksmith in 1874, sold it to William McConnell in 1878. John S. and Wylie Moore opened a wagon shop in 1877 opposite McConnell's blacksmith shop. David Snyder and later John Pagle operated livery stables. (The latter was located on the present library site.)

When bicycling became popular in 1897, the young ladies organized a "cycling club" with Misses Gertrude McClellan, Edith Wade and Nellie Johnston as officers.

In the early 1900's the people of Gibson City area looked for

some way to improve their muddy or dusty roads and streets. Jacob D. Mellinger was instrumental in getting main street graveled about 1890, and as road commissioner, he promoted the first pike or gravel road in this area. Soon other streets and roads were graveled. Sangamon Avenue was paved in 1906.

The wooden sidewalks in Gibson City were built up on poles two or three feet high from the street level to keep out of the water during the rainy seasons. By 1890 the first brick sidewalks were being built and a few years later the first concrete sidewalk was laid on North Lott Boulevard at the corner of 11th Street.

As the automobile became more common, Illinois began to build roads of concrete or asphalt. Gibson City is the intersection of three major highways, Route 9, 47 and 54. Illinois Route 9 (east - west) was built in 1924 and resurfaced in 1968-69. Illinois Route 47 (north - south) was originally built in 1932 and resurfaced in 1969. U. S. 54 (trans - state road from Chicago to El Paso, Texas) was constructed in 1931 - 32 and resurfaced to the north of Gibson City in 1970.

Drummer Township contains over 79 miles of roads; highway commissioner Albert Schmidt reports that all these are blacktopped, with the exception of only three miles of gravel road. In 1971 Gibson City is proud of its many streets of concrete, brick or asphalt, with most of the alleys graveled or resurfaced with asphalt.



Driving her horse, Nellie, for one of the Corn Carnival parades in the early 1900's is Miss Mayme Barrow, who later became Mrs. Jesse Schertz. By that time the streets in the city were bricked. In the background some of the Corn Carnival decorations can be seen.



Sleighs and cutters pulled by horses furnished the winter transportation in Gibson City's early days. Mrs. Lucy Culter is pictured at the corner of Sangamon and 11th St. The Saxton home is on

the corner where the Gibson Federal Savings and Loan Ass'n is now. The old Presbyterian Church and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church can be seen in the background.



Tom and Charlie were the names of the matched pair that pulled John F. Riblet's hack in the early 1900's.



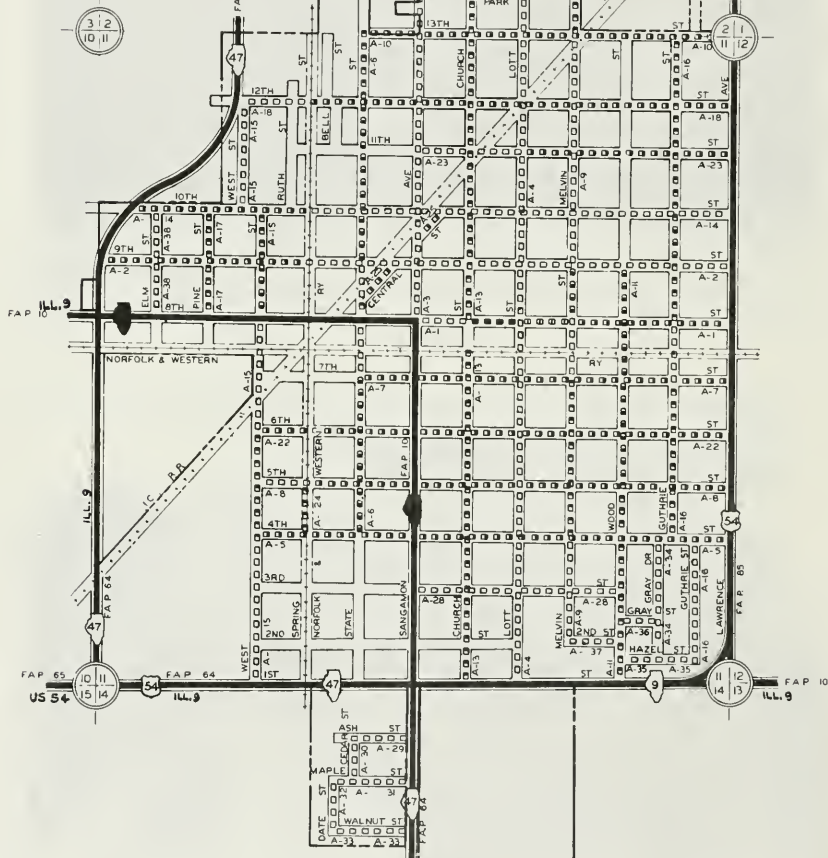
High board sidewalks, a few wooden awnings and hitching posts - and lots of mud - is the Sangamon Avenue of the early 1900's. Shown here on Gibson City's main street are some buggies and wagons pulled by horses. Driving the team in the center of the picture is Sam Preston.



A picture post card of Gibson City's business district shows the way cars were parked "in the good old days." At right is the old city hall

building. This post card was provided by Vernon Anderson and was dated Sept. 7, 1927.

T23N, R7E



OF
GIBSON
(GIBSON CITY)
FORD COUNTY
POPULATION 1960 CENSUS 3,453
SCALE IN FEET

RUNWAYS

Gibson Citians saw their first aeroplane Sept. 29, 1910, when Walter Brookins flew the Wright "B" via the "iron compass" (the ICC tracks) from Chicago to Springfield. Fifteen year old Curtiss La Q Day launched his 20 foot biplane glider in March, 1911, from an embankment north of town, breaking all its lower ribs, but he continued learning to fly whenever school and family pressures allowed.

In July, 1915, Gibson City had its first close look at an aeroplane (red winged Benoist) when La Q Aeroplane Company sponsored flying exhibitions at the old fair grounds west of the Canning Company. "Satan" Day, dare - devil boy aviator, thrilled a large audience as he "soared and turned and banked and dipped . . . in his baby biplane" 1500 feet above the ground, while the ball game continued, complete with band music, and the flight recorded on O. B. Lowery and George Nix's movie film. (NOTE: Complete original stories of these events by La Q Day are in Aviation Scrapbook and Centennial Corner articles.)

In World War I, Henry Hager was an aerial observer in France in 1918. "Ace" pilot William Brotherton was killed in aerial combat in France in 1918 and was honored by the "most imposing funeral every held in Ford County," when he was brought home for burial.

Some of the World War II pilots from Gibson City were Bill Briggs, Loyal Crowe (both career Air Force men), Jack

Hayse (served again in Korean conflict), Richard Schertz and William Utterback.

An air strip for Gibson City was constructed in 1951 east of Gibson City along Rt. 54 on the Pearce Estate land, farmed by F. E. and Floyd Walker. Flyers active at this time were Woodrow Barnes, Elmer Colwell, D. A. Garard, Howard Peters, Lloyd Sawyer, and Monnie Wagoner. The Gibson City Flying Club, formed in the early 1950's, presently owns two aircraft and has twelve members.

Presently flying in the armed services are Army 1st Lt. Robert E. Hester and Marine 2nd Lt. Leland P. Walters. Airline pilots are Bill Greime with Eastern; David Roop, Port of Call Travel Club, and Loyal Crowe, TWA.

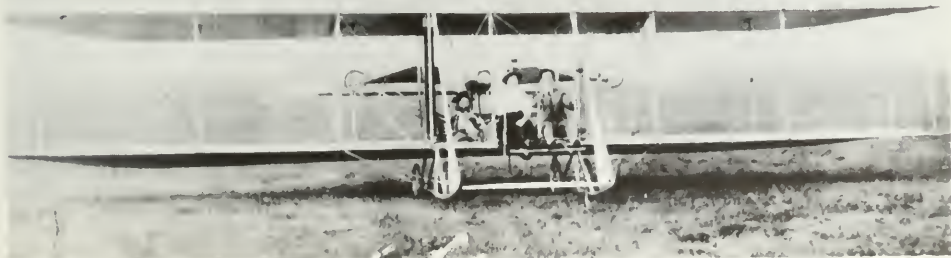
Gibson City Municipal Airport, located five miles east of Gibson City, opened June 22, 1969. Developed by cooperative efforts of the Chamber of Commerce, City Council, and many interested private citizens, the airport has a current estimated value of \$65,000 with a cash investment of approximately \$20,000. Airport manager Dick Schertz leased a portion of his farm land to the city at \$1.00 a year, so the airport could be constructed to serve the aeronautical needs of the local businesses and attract more industry to this area.

Presently fifteen airplanes are based on the field, representing six local businesses and several within 15 mile radius. A flying school is established, charter business in operation and an instrument approach system in the offing. With the only hard surface runway in Ford County, Gibson City can truly be proud of this accomplishment.



La Q Aeroplane Co.'s Benoist biplane shown at Cicero Field, Chicago, 1915. At left, wearing cap, is William

Susdorf, v.p.; Orris Harry, sec.-treas.; George Bloom, pres.; and La Q Day in cockpit.



Early aviator was Curtiss La Q Day, shown here with his mother, Mrs. Margaret Day, in a Wright B aeroplane, 1914.

GIBSON CITY MUNICIPAL AIRPORT



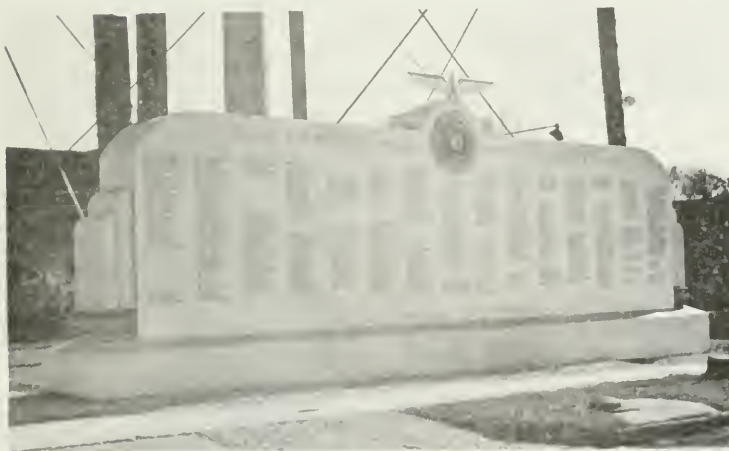
Located five miles east of Gibson City, the airport was developed by cooperative efforts of the Chamber of Commerce, City Council and many interested citizens, on land donated by the Richard Schertz family.



Part of the Gibson City Municipal Airport is shown at the dedication, June 22, 1969. The half mile long hard surface runway at the top is joined by taxiway running to hangars under construction. Airplane tiedown area is at left.



American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars members made up the color guard which led the Memorial Day parade.



World War II Honor Roll

V E T E R A N S

LEE LOWERY POST

Lee Lowery Post No. 568 of the American Legion was organized Nov. 11, 1919. The first meeting was held in rooms above Peter Schertz Lumber Co. (Now Hager Lumber).

The charter for the post was signed by the national commander Aug. 1, 1920, and by the state commander on Aug. 20, 1920.

The post was named in memory of Lee Lowery who was killed Oct. 29, 1918 in World War I.

There were 50 charter members and Dr. R. N. Lane served as the group's first commander. Three of them still live and reside in Gibson City. They are Elmer Sawyer, Walter Platt and Clifford Augspurger.

William D. Barnhart was honored and presented a life membership in 1970.

The post celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1969.

A big undertaking was the purchase of their downtown two-story building in 1944 located on the northwest corner of 9th St. and Sangamon Ave. (former I.O.O.F. hall).

On Dec. 21, 1970, 14 World War I veterans held their first reunion in 20 years at the Legion Hall. They voted to make it an annual county-wide event.

The Sons of the American Legion unit was organized in March 1971 with 15 charter members.

A complete list of charter members follows:

Robert N. Lane, George W. Blades, J. F. Main, Wade Hool, Charles E. Lowery Jr., Earl G. Guy, Floyd Sawyer, C. Robert Patton, Finley M. Guy, Charles Whallon, Andrew R. Tarbox, Elmer Sawyer, Simon F. Denne, Leo E. Phillips, Elmer Sparks;

S. A. Graham, Roy Kightlinger, Hampton G. Bergstrom, Charles C. Lindauer, Virgil Speers, Walter Platt, Frank B. Morgan, Fred J. Glose, Harlow A. Stauffer, E. E. Potts, Lucian Speer, L. H. Lohman, Fred W. Johnson, Richard H. Wilken;

Jesse V. Schertz, W. S. Lamb, Thomas Brown, Leonard E. Hicks, John L. Moody, Grover C. Norris, Glenn Ricketts, Raymond C. Phillips, Albert J. D. Brading, Ray C. Speedie, Harold M. Kemple, Emmett R. Meyers, Newton E. Hull, Robert Burns, Floyd Speedie, H. A. Lovett, H. W. Wilken, O. J. Houts, Clemens Gensheimer, Minnie Lucille Snyder, and Clifford Augspurger.



Staff Sgt. John Keller
Died April 24, 1942



Lee C. Lowery
killed in action
Sept. 26, 1918



Lt. William Brotherton
Died Oct. 10, 1918



Civil War veterans who marched in the Memorial Day parade in 1927 included two Negro citizens in the community. The picture was taken on May 29, 1927. A portion of the former Evangelical United Brethren Church is shown at

right with the present Ivan Donner home in the background. Pictured from left are Page Price, Poly Wright, William "Pat" Day, John Ross, Gilbert Jordan, Sam Kashner and George Haupt.

CIVIL WAR VETERAN

Another era in the history of Gibson City came to an end in May, 1937, when William "Pat" Day, a member of the Grand Army of the Republic, represented locally by Lott Post No. 70, passed away at the age of ninety-seven.

Mr. Day enlisted in Company G of the thirty-seventh Illinois Volunteer Infantry in Chicago, there being no con-

tingent in Gibson City. He participated in eleven major battles, and was wounded four times by Confederate bullets. He was in company with Sherman on his March to the Sea, his most important engagement being the battle of Vicksburg. On October fourth, 1864, he was honorably discharged and returned to Gibson City to resume farming.

VFW

In 1950, and early 1951, three men from Gibson City belonged to the Bloomington VFW post. They were Ed Fox, Bill Poppett, and Dick Goben. It was suggested to them that they start a post in Gibson City.

The first meeting was held March 11, 1951 at the Grade School. These are the minutes of that first meeting:

The meeting was called to order by Jack Duggins, 7th District Commander, with 23 applicants present. The obligation was given by Commander McReynolds of Post 454. The following men were elected to office: William Hoover, commander; Bill Scott, Sr. vice-commander; James Taylor, Jr. vice-commander; Dick Goben, quartermaster; and Dean Shull, adjutant. The regular meetings will be held on the first and third Thursdays of each month, at 7:30, at Goben's Bakery.

L. J. Weber, Asst. Inspector
Acting Adjutant

Meeting places were Goben's Bakery, basement of the old library, around tables at the South Park, and the Boy Scout Cabin. In May 1952, a vote was taken, and passed, to purchase the present building.

Our first meeting in the new building was held in February 1953. Our mortgage burning ceremony was held in December 1968.

The building has been remodeled several times. The latest is the rear addition being made into a bar room.

The Ladies Auxiliary was formed in December 1951, with the following officers: Maria Ehresman, president; Jean

Crossman, Sr. vice-president; Freeda Theesfield, Jr. vice-president; Mary Lou Ferguson, treasurer; and Janine Shull, secretary.

Past Commanders

Dr. R. N. Lane, 1920; J. F. Main, 1921; A. C. Rasmussen, 1922; Chas. Whalen, 1923; W. R. Platt, 1924; Ray Speedie, 1925; Chas. Keller, 1926; A. Brading, 1927; G. M. Ricketts, 1928; H. Murry, 1929;

Joe Schrock, 1930; Simon Denne (deceased April 13, 1931); William Wilken (un-expired term of S. Denne), and 1932; Roy Main, 1933; Lee Barnhart, 1934; Henry Hager, 1935; Dr. L. E. Potts, 1936; W. M. Loy, 1937; Glen Fitzpatrick, 1938; W. L. Barnhart, 1939;

R. O. Ringhand, 1940; George Swearingen, 1941; Clifford Augspurger, 1942; Clifford Okey, 1943; Dwight Augspurger, 1944; Richard Goodell, 1945; Lyle Kashner, 1946; Andy Reynolds, 1947; Mandel Loeb, 1948; Owen Crowe, 1949;

Keith Sample, 1950; Chas. Willets, 1951; Corlis Finis (un-expired term of C. Willets), 1951; Earl Wright, 1952; Robert Deener, 1953; Frederick Zander, 1954; Lynn Ogg, 1955; Glenn Barrow, 1956; William Zimmerman, 1957; Henry Wilken, 1958; John Thomsen (un-expired term of H. Wilken) 1958; George Lange, 1959;

Donald Hudson, 1960; Richard Rhodes, 1961; John Sample, 1962; Orville Willemssen, 1963; David Randa, 1964; Charles Schutte, 1965; Harry Ricks, 1966; John Muters, 1967; Frank Berkler, 1968; Wayne Perkins, 1969; Robert Thomsen, 1970 and Charles Bane, 1971.

WOMEN RELIEF CORPS AUXILIARY GRAND ARMY OF REPUBLIC

Women Relief Corps, Auxiliary Grand Army of Republic, was organized and the charter was signed April 16, 1885.

There were 37 members and the corp was named after Margaret Lott. Thereby the name of Lott Women Relief Corps No. 24.

The meeting place was the Noble building until sold then in the basement of the Moyer Library. Now in 1971 with 13 members we meet in homes and the Assembly of God Church.

The dues at the time of charter was one dollar a year after 86 years the yearly dues are \$1.25.

All of the Corps pictures and property is in a WRC Museum at Springfield, Ill.

THE LEE LOWERY UNIT 568 AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

A group of ladies met and organized the American Legion Auxiliary, Lee Lowery Unit 568 Department of Illinois in 1920. Their charter was issued January 1, 1921. There are 83 names on the charter, wives, mothers, sisters and daughters of World War I veterans, who had the year before formed the Lee Lowery Post 568.

Mrs. Martha Patton was the first president. Of the original members six are still members of the present unit. They are Mrs. Mae Brading, Mrs. Marie Whallon, Mrs. Emma Jensen, Mrs. Elmer Sawyer, Mrs. Lulu Phares and Mrs. Vesta Preston. Most of the early records are misplaced or destroyed.

The American Legion Auxiliarys purpose "to contribute to the accomplishments of the aims and purposes of the American Legion." Its activities are designed to carry out the parts of the American Legion program which can best be accomplished by the work of women. Now membership is limited to women who have personal connections with World War I and II, the Korean and Vietnam Conflicts.

As it was fifty years ago this Unit is still active today with community service, child welfare, Americanism and rehabilitation.

Mrs. John Muters is the present president with 105 members.



Mrs. Laurel Ping, new president of the V.F.W. Auxiliary accepts the gavel from retiring president Mrs. William Pearson at their installation ceremony. Other officers and new members are (front row from left) Mrs. Frank Warder, trustee; Mrs. Donovan Taylor, junior vice president; Mrs. Harold Andrae, guard; Mrs. Virgil Stewart, trustee. Back row from left

to right are: Mrs. Charles Schutte, treasurer; Mrs. Nadine Tomblin, secretary; Mrs. Zelma Bane; Mrs. Wilma Tandy, chaplain; Miss Gloria Jean Kennedy; Mrs. Robert Crossman, senior vice president; Mrs. Donald Douglas, Mrs. Frank Hendricks, conductress and Mrs. Kenneth Meredith



The American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars firing squad



Kenneth W. Meredith (left) was installed as the new commander of the Brotherton - Keller Post No. 6289 of the V.F.W. Laurel Ping, senior vice commander of the 7th district was the installing officer. Other officers installed were (from left)

Meredith, Albert Tongate, trustee; Ping, Ray McGehee, trustee; Sam Barrow, adjutant; Roy Boyd, junior vice commander; Jerry Garard, senior vice commander; Robert Crossman, historian and Virgil Stewart, quartermaster.

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Mary Grim Pate — The Pioneer Village of Gibson City
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